

KEY SCRIPTURE:

*“And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, **great boldness in preaching your word.**” Acts of the Apostles 4:29 NLT*

*“When they heard the report, **all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer** to God: “O Sovereign Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them— And now, O Lord, hear their threats, **and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word.**”*

Acts of the Apostles 4:24, 29 NLT

*“There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were **owners of lands or houses sold them** and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles’ feet, **and it was distributed to each as any had need.**” Acts 4:34-35 ESV*

*“And **day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.**”*

Acts 2:46-47 ESV

*“**Now the entire group** of those who believed were of one heart and mind, and **no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but instead they held everything in common.**”*

Acts 4:32 CSB

*“When they were released, **they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them.**”*

Acts 4:23 ESV

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”

Galatians 1:8-9 NKJV

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

Matthew 16:24 NKJV

Start Reading: Acts 4

Start Talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Share a story of a time someone went out of their way to celebrate something good with you or to be there with you in a time of need. Or share a time you were there for another person in the same way.

Start Thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- What are some cultural differences between the church community in Acts 4 and the church today? What are some similarities?
- Looking at Acts 4 and focusing on the ways the people “had each other’s backs,” what are some observations that you find most meaningful?
- If we model community based on the early church, what kind of responsibility does that give us in terms of having each other’s back?
- How does the church having each other’s back model the way Jesus loves us?

Start Sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- What part of the message did God use to impact you most? Why?
- In your own words describe the three necessities of a “got your back community” from the message:
 - Directs your attention to the Gospel
 - Willing to sacrifice personal comfort for other’s well-being
 - Loves being together
- Which of these three areas of community are you strong in, and which one are you going to commit to growing in? How do you plan on doing so?
- How are the ways that Christian Community (ideally) has your back different than other types of community?
- Why will Christian Community occasionally fail to have your back in the way you want, and why is it okay? How will you respond when that happens and why?
- Can you think of some “well-packaged bad advice” you’ve seen lately? What would be a more biblical way of speaking into the same issue that advice was speaking into?

Start Praying. Pray this prayer in your own words with your group.

Father in Heaven, thank you for The Church! Thank you for blessing us with groups of people to fellowship with. Help us to be a healthy community of people who are authentically there for each other. Show us areas in our life that we can grow to be better at community and help us to juggle giving and receiving friendship with other Christians. Father, we ultimately pray that you use our Christian Community to reach the city and the world! In Jesus’ name, amen!

Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Pray and brainstorm for one specific way to grow in Christian Community this week. Share it with someone and ask that person to check on your progress next week and the week after!
- Memorize Acts 4:29