

# “Never Stand Alone”

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This type of a relationship is radically counter cultural. It invites us to create space for people on the outside to be part of what God is doing. Rather than being exclusive, we can be inclusive and allow God to build us together for His purposes.

*If you are ready to see God working in the midst of His church, you can be part of His larger story and purposes. If you are part of a group, you have taken the first step. Now ask God to show you where to serve. Maybe your group would like to serve together in an area of ministry. Discuss what others in your group are doing and see if the group can join in. If you are willing to make yourself available, God will fit you into the church, His dwelling place, and empower you to be part of His great work.*

## WRAP-UP

We were created for relationship with God and one another. But sin can separate us through fear and mistrust of God, shame for what we have done and self-imposed isolation when we distance ourselves from God and others. God wants to build us together as His holy temple with Jesus as the cornerstone. When God has a dwelling place of believers who stand with one another, He can empower them to be part of and build something greater than themselves. Together we can be used for His larger story and purposes.

## Memory Verse

*We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.*  
-Ephesians 2:19-22 NLT

## PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: \_\_\_\_\_

Pray for your group members' needs: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Challenge- Join a group – start serving – get real!*

## INTRODUCTION

God’s desire for you is that you would never stand alone. We know this because he created us for connection. From God’s observation in Genesis chapter 2 He declared “It is not good for man to be alone.” But we are not always good at creating and maintaining relationships. Sometimes we drift toward isolation, and trouble. Let’s see what God has to say about standing together.

## Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

If you play a sport is it a team or an individual competition?

## STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

### 1. Distancing Ourselves

*Genesis 3:8-10 NLT - 8 When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. 9 Then the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" 10 He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."*

It is no surprise that God wants us to be in community. After all, He created us in His image, and He is a triune God; Father, Son and Spirit. In fact, He said Let Us create man in Our image. And then there is that statement in Genesis 2:18, “It is not good for the man to be alone”. But sin drove a wedge between man, God and one another.

*What is the first indication we see that sin caused man to distance himself from God (v.8)?*

Verse 10 sums up the way sin changed the relationship between Adam and God-

- Fear – I was afraid
- shame – I was naked
- isolation – so I hid

*Genesis 3:1-4 NLT - 1 The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?" 2 "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. 3 "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'" 4 "You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman.*

The discourse in Gen 3:1-4 the serpent plants seed of doubt and mistrust resulting in Eve twisting what God had said.

*Similar patterns of doubt, mistrust and twisting of God's word still apply to things that tempt us to sin today. What sins might these excuses be applied to justify?*

- everyone does it
- it isn't hurting anyone
- God really doesn't care if I do this

*Genesis 3:11-13 NLT - 11 "Who told you that you were naked?" the LORD God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man replied, "It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it." 13 Then the LORD God asked the woman, "What have you done?" "The serpent deceived me," she replied. "That's why I ate it."*

The next thing we see that resulted from sin is that rather than taking responsibility for our actions, we began to blame others.

*While both Adam and Eve told the truth about what happened (she did give Adam the fruit and the serpent did deceive her) neither answered God's direct question to them. God asked, "Have you eaten from the tree...?" and "What have you done?" Based on 1John 1:9 what might have happened if they had confessed what they had done without shifting the blame? What prevents us from confessing our sin?*

*1 John 1:9 NLT - 9 But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.*

## 2. Stand with God

*Matthew 18:20 NLT - 20 For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."*

It is nearly impossible to separate standing with God and standing with one another. As Jesus himself tells us, where two or three gather He is in their midst.

*Some people think they don't need church, "just me and God." What are some of the dangers you see in trying to be a "spiritual lone ranger", just you and God apart from other believers? Have there been times in your life you didn't have the support of a body of other believers? What challenges does that present?*

## 3. Stand with One Another

*Ephesians 2:19-22 NLT - 19 So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. 20 Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. 21 We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. 22 Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.*

As Paul writes in Ephesians, we are one family; God's family. Verse 20 describes us as a house where God himself dwells with Jesus as the cornerstone. The word used to describe our connection is *synarmologeō* and it means we are firmly, closely, compactly joined together. God wants you to be part of and build something greater than yourself alongside other believers.

*When you recall your spiritual journey, what group would you say you felt most closely connected to? Did you feel you were part of God's larger story and purpose when you were in that group?*