



WEEK SEVEN: WHY DO I NEED CHURCH?

Appetizer

Have you ever been on a team? If you have, you know that there is something incredibly special about joining together with a group of people to accomplish a similar goal.

(Teachers: Have a couple of students talk about their team experiences. Ask them what the team accomplished together. Ask them why they enjoyed their team experience so much. You may also want to ask students to talk about the best teams of all time to generate discussion.)

When we think about the idea of teams, we usually think of sports. But what are some other groups that have to work like a team?

(Teachers: Help your students discover some answers like military units, firefighter units, and companies.)

Have you ever wondered what God thinks about teams? When we look at the entire Bible, we realize that God has cared about teams from the very beginning of time. He created two people in the beginning, not just one. He got animals to go on Noah's ark two-by-two. Jesus gathered a team of 12 disciples around Him to help Him spread God's message of love. God has a great plan to use teams in our world for a great purpose.

This week in *Snack Pack*, we learned about a few of the bonuses we get from being on the team of a church. We studied things like working together, building friendships, and holding one another accountable. Today we're going to dig into the idea of how the church should work like a team.

Main Course

In the Old Testament, God called a specific group of people His children and gave them the name Israel. There was another group of people who did not know God called Gentiles. God made it clear that he had chosen Israel to be a part of an incredible team that would come together to tell the whole world about God.

Read Isaiah 49:6

In this passage, God wanted to help Israel understand its role and purpose as His team in the world. The greatest Coach ever wanted every player to know what the No. 1 mission was -- to be a light for the Gentiles so that every nation can be saved. What an awesome mission!

The truth for you and I today is that we get to be a part of the very same team. This team still exists today, and it still has the same mission. God's team in the world can include you.

Dessert

(Teachers: Bring in a garden hose.)

What am I holding here? That's right -- it's a hose. I'm sure most of you have either used a hose or watched someone else use one. But have you ever thought about how a hose works? Let's think about it. One end of the hose connects to a water spigot on the side of your house. Connected to that spigot is a pipe that's attached to another pipe that's attached to another pipe that is eventually connected to a water source. As a result, when you turn on the spigot, water comes flowing through the hose. But the water does not stop in the hose (unless there is a kink in it). The hose is designed so that water can flow in one end and out the other.

What different things can a hose be used for?

(Teachers: Help your students come up with some answers and write them on the board as they do. Some examples could be watering grass, watering plants and bushes, connecting to a sprinkler, and washing a car.)

When God talks about Israel (which in our day includes the church) being a light to the entire world so that it might be saved, He basically wanted Israel to be a hose. You and I are part of the most powerful team in the world -- the church. God's purpose for His team is for it to be like a hose. God's team connects to Him to receive the living water of His love, mercy, grace, forgiveness, life, purpose, and meaning. But God doesn't give us these things so that they stop with us. He wants us to be hoses that spread these living waters into the world. We are the hose God will use to spread the message of Jesus Christ to the entire world!

How can God use us as His hose in the world?

(Teachers: Write your students' answers to this question on the board next to the list you created before. Help the group come up with answers like telling our friends about God's love, helping a neighbor, giving of our resources, offering forgiveness, and more. As you finish this discussion, cut the hose into small pieces and give each student in your group a piece to take home.)

As we leave today, we're all going to take a piece of this hose with us. Use this hose to remind you that God has a great purpose for you as a part of His team. He wants to use this team to spread His message to our town, our city, our state, and our world. Every one of us gets to be a part of this great mission. So let's pray together that God will make us passionate about being a hose that extends His hope and love to the rest of the world.