

XP3

WE: Home XP

[FOR STUDENT PASTOR]

The week before you begin the WE series, e-mail the parents of your students to inform them about the new series and what students will be discussing. This will help keep your parents in the know, and it will give them an opportunity to stay involved in their child's activities. You may also want to include updates or reminders about important upcoming events, registration deadlines, retreats or church projects.

Use the e-mail to encourage your parents and celebrate each other's successes.

Note: You may want to use this opportunity to extend a personal invitation to your students' parents to be a part of the community of your church through small groups, a Bible study, etc. A great place to do that would be after the "Experience" section shown below.

Copy and paste the following description into your e-mail to help convey the main goal of this series.

E-mail for parents:

WE overview:

In following Christ, there is one truth that most of us forget—we were never meant to do this alone. We need other people. It's critical not just because we need friends, but also because in community we understand more about who God is. We see how He is working in other people's lives. We learn things that God has taught them, and we get an opportunity to love and serve others. The WE series helps us discover the "WHY" behind community—why we need it, why we should pursue it.

WE: Week One (include date)

We need other people. We get that when we feel lonely, don't we? But the reality is that there are times when the last thing we want is someone around—whether it's our own grumpiness or because we just don't want to be hurt again. But God made us in such a way that people fill a very specific need in our lives. And while God does supply all our needs, He created us to need other people, too.

WE: Week Two (include date)

We talked last week about how we need people, and if we're honest, we all have realized that at some point or another. But there's a reluctance to take that next step because it's risky. It's scary. And most of all, it's messy. True community costs us something. But if we don't have it, it will cost us a lot more.

WE: Week Three (include date)

People's stories are powerful, aren't they? There's something about hearing what's going on in another person's life that puts things in perspective for us. We may be thinking that God has forgotten us, that He doesn't care about what's going on in our world, but then we hear someone share how God showed up when they really needed Him. And because of that, we begin to think that maybe, just maybe, He can be there for us, too. That's the power of community. It's how we see God at work in our world. It's how we grow closer to Him. And it's an important part of growing in our relationship with Him.

EXPERIENCE:

Over the next three weeks, we are talking to your student about the importance of community. What that means is simply this—we need other people. God never meant for us to go through this life alone. There are times when each one of us knows that very well, and then there are other times when it's the last thing on our minds. Wherever you are at, you need other people. And they need you. It's part of how we see God in action in our world. It's also how we learn more about Him and ourselves.

Recently, I ran across the following article from Carey Nieuwhof, a pastor in Canada. It's a very candid confession, and one that may reflect your story at some point in your life.

FIND A FRIEND

By Carey Nieuwhof

By default over the years, I have been a pretty private person. I handle most things pretty tightly. I don't have a lot of people who are close to me, but those who are close to me are people I trust implicitly and establish a deep loyalty to.

When I was going through a tough season a few years ago, I went to see some Christian counselors, and their helpful message was simply this—I couldn't go through this alone. Everything inside me said, "Yes, I can," but I realized they were right. I couldn't do it alone.

I remember the night I shared what I was going through with my community group at the time. I'm sure my pride had kept me from talking about it before. Plus, I had earlier been convinced I would just wake up out of this at some point and it would go away. I didn't need to tell anyone. Clearly, that strategy was failing. So I talked to our community group through some tears one night. The love, prayer, empathy and compassion that poured forth was huge. I was humbled and blown away.

Toni, my wife, continues to show an unbelievable kindness. And I have a handful of close friends near and far (some live a long way away), some colleagues and some staffers who tracked with me through this season. I am so grateful for them.

Friendship is still not easy for me. I am really quite private at my core. In this networked world, I know thousands of people by name, but if people get too close, I can still push away. I'm working on that. God's working on that. There has been some big progress on that, I think.

But what I want to say is that I have come to realize that you can't do it alone. We are social beings. We are meant to be together.

I am always surprised that when I sit down with someone to talk through a life situation they are going through, and I ask them "Who else do you talk to this about?", the #1 answer is "No one," That breaks my heart.

If you're going through a hard time, find a friend. Talk to them. Pray with them. For me, it was hard, but life giving, to include a handful of people in a circle. It was life giving to see a group of people in my community group care deeply. We can't do this alone—and we were never meant to do it that way.