

November 8: Building Community – Inner Circle

Gather: Bible, pen, paper, slips of paper, jar/hat or other container to hold slips of paper

Introduction: Welcome to our three-week look at building community in our lives. Today we start with a closer look at how we build our inner circle, or those that are closest to us. Let's start by first discussing what community is.

Community: people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common. It is also fellowship with others, sharing common attitudes, interests, goals.

Psalms 133:1 "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!"

Draw your circles (or use the chart at the bottom of this document). Put one circle in the middle of the page. Draw a circle around it, and a final outer circle around that one. Label the center circle as "Inner Circle", the middle one as "Local", and the final as "Global".

The Inner Circle

In this case, the inner circle does not refer to your closest friends and confidantes. It is a little larger than that and involves the people who you interact with the most regularly. While it involves close family and friends, it can also include your peers, teachers, church family, those you work with, youth group, teammates, and even actual neighbours.

Who do you consider part of your inner circle? Who are the people that are closest to you and that you interact with most frequently? Write these names/people in the Inner Circle on your chart.

Some people you might consider include:

- Family members
- Friends
- Mentors
- Peers
- Youth and leaders at youth group
- Church members
- Teammates
- Work colleagues

Draw the same circles again on the back or on a new paper. This time, on the inner circle write down ways you are building your community already. Then add other ways you could build that community. Verses to help you:

- James 5:16
- Proverbs 27:17
- 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18
- Hebrews 10:24-25
- Philippians 2:1-4
- Ephesians 4:1-3
- Acts 4:32-34
- Romans 12:3-18
- Ephesians 4:29
- Colossians 3:12-17
- 1 Peter 4:8-11
- Galatians 6:2,10

And Some example ideas:

- Encouraging others
- Being lovingly honest (telling the truth in love and being honest even when it's difficult)
- Being trustworthy
- Encourage each other to be/do better
- Investing time into people
- Listening well
- Avoiding being exclusive, being open to expanding your circle
- Willing to talk about disagreements, make compromises and admit when wrong
- Lending a hand when someone's in need

Now think about some of the ways you can build community that you are not doing or could do better at. Write down steps you'll take to work on those and build your community in the coming weeks.

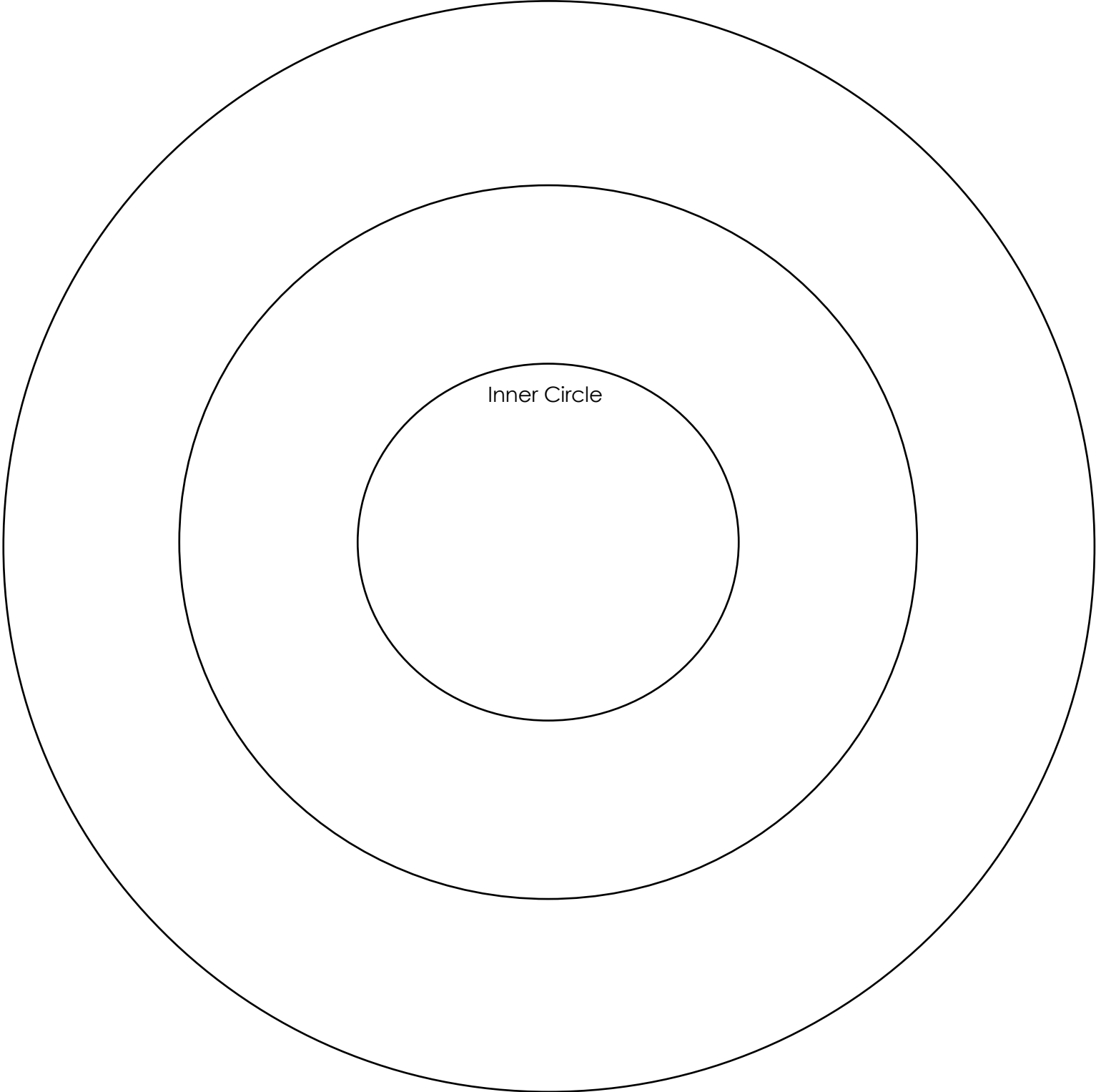
Memory Verse: 1 Peter 4:8 "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."

Ways to build our community can be summed up with "love each other." Over the next three weeks we will memorize 1 Peter 4:8-10.

Prayer: On slips of paper, write down the names of each person you wrote on your inner circle (or the group name you put, such as 'coworkers'). Put them in a container. Draw a slip of paper and spend time praying for them and how you can build community with them. Do a couple slips today and do the rest during the next week!

Challenge: At the end of each day this week, evaluate the day. If you think you worked on building up your inner circle (even in small ways), put a check mark below. If you think you tore it down (even a little), put an x. If you put an x, take a moment to think of how you can change that and pray over it. Do you need to apologize? To change a way you are acting? Invite someone else into the circle?

Communities



Inner Circle

How to Build that Community

