**LAW #3 - YOU MUST PRIORITIZE AUTHENTIC**

**CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**

Following Jesus was never meant to be a solo activity. Discipleship is a team sport. And Jesus has designed churches to shine to the world by the quality of their life together.

Jesus gives the world one basis on which they can judge us as disciples: how well we love one another (John 13:35).

In other words, he knows that people hunger to be accepted and valued, to have their better selves called into being, and to walk in right relationship with both God and people.

**The best witness for the Gospel is authentic Christian community.**

The Early Church knew and built on this truth.

* In spite of being a persecuted minority on the fringes of society, the first 300 years of the church saw the number of Christians grow to become more than half of the Roman Empire by AD350!
* Aside from the first few years in Jerusalem, this growth took place almost exclusively in homes.
* These were extended households centered on Jesus, where relational networks loved and enfolded friends and neighbors into the community of faith, and eventually into the Kingdom.

If we translate those lessons to our lives today, this means that:

* We need to rediscover the power of building communities of believers who share a common mission vision.
* This could be to a specific neighborhood (geographically defined) or network (sociologically defined).
* The leaders of the group are the ones who set the one mission vision, which they call others to join them in reaching.

**The key is that there is one mission focus to which all are committed, rather than multiple**

**individual missions for which the group acts as a support.**

The problem is that this is that true community requires a shared purpose and identity, which comes from one specific mission vision, which the leaders call others to serve.

It will be one where Jesus is at the center, but anyone can come and join in, wherever they are on their spiritual journey – there is no holiness or doctrine test for entry.

These communities must operate with a high value on welcome and acceptance, so that friends can come as they are and experience Christian community before they are expected to believe what we believe.

**APPLY THE LAW:**

Are you in a missional community that shares a common mission vision?

If not, how can you plan to be in one within the next 6 months? This will involve either starting one, or serving another person’s vision for a season.