



CHUCK KNOWS CHURCH

The Committee: Reflecting the Community

This group study is designed for a 45-60 minute discussion after viewing the film.

All Chuck Knows Church videos can be viewed at:

www.ChuckKnowsChurch.com

Introduction:

The Committee is a humorous and poignant online series that examines the struggles congregation's face as they look toward a preferred future. Using real world topics, *The Committee* is sure to open discussion in your congregation.

The series follows Park Grove Community Church, a make-believe urban U.S. congregation, which has lost its pastor and is closing its doors, unless it reinvents itself. Park Grove is faced with a difficult decision. They seemingly have tried everything humanly possible. Should it close? Things are so bad that a retired pastor didn't show up to help them decide the congregation's future – so it's up to the last remaining members to discover it for themselves.

Although some of the characters and situations are simplified to accommodate the format, they may feel familiar. Your congregation may not be facing closure, may have a wonderful pastor, and be a vital and growing church. However, all congregations face the issues addressed in *The Committee* at some point.

Have an open conversation about the issues covered in the series.

Chuck Knows Church Resources

Website: www.ChuckKnowsChurch.com

Discipleship Ministries Website: www.UMCdiscipleship.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ChuckKnowsChurch

Twitter: @ChuckKnows

Instagram: ChuckKnowsChurch

Suggest ways on Twitter to save Park Grove. Use this Hashtag **#SaveParkGrove**

> Watch *The Committee: Reflecting the Community*

(15 minutes)

> Starters (15 minutes)

As Chuck is outside the church he encounters a man who invites him to think about Park Grove and its place in the community. With your group make a list about your community using these two categories.

WHAT USED TO BE	WHAT IT IS TODAY

Discuss with one or two people, and then share with the whole group:

- What do the answers to “*What Used to Be*” reveal about the history of your community?
- What do the answers to “*What it is Today*” say about what has changed?

On the arrow, mark where you think your church is today. Is it living in “what used to be?” Does it reflect where you community is today? Or is it somewhere in-between?

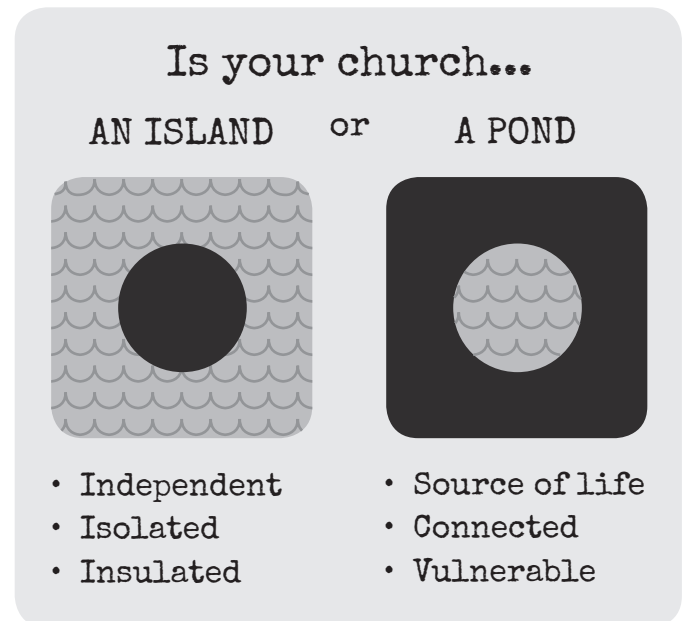


> Island or a Pond? (10 minutes)

There is a remarkable difference between an island and a pond. An island has its own ecosystem, is rarely affected by the ocean that surrounds it (hurricane or tsunami), and is independent.

A pond is in the center of an ecosystem that is connected to the land that surrounds it. It is the source of water for animals and vegetation. It is very vulnerable to its surroundings.

Churches often operate as islands or as ponds. "Island Churches" have little connection to the surrounding community — church is viewed by its members simply as a building where ministry happens, and a majority of the members do not live in the immediate community. "Pond Churches," on the other hand, are deeply connected to the surrounding communities, are a source of life to the people who live around them, and ministry occurs both inside and outside the church building.



Discuss with three or four people, and then share with the whole group:

- What are some examples of ways Park Grove was acting like an island.
- What are examples of the ways they were thinking like a pond.
- Do the members of your church see it as a pond or an island?

> Reflection on the Bible (20 minutes)

Ask a member to read aloud the following passages from Jeremiah 29:7 and Matthew 5:14-16. Ask another person to read the Background section.

"Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." - Jeremiah 29:7

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. - Matthew 5:14-16

Background:

The word of God was given to the Hebrews held captive in Babylon. These were words of survival and wisdom. If the Hebrews sought what was good for the city, they too would prosper. Just as bridges and cities go together, churches and communities are linked. God's people are to be connected to the city, the community, and the world.

During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus challenged his followers to be the light of the world. Light reveals the truth, spreads warmth, and offers hope to those who are in darkness.

Questions for Discussion:

If your group has more than seven members, divide into groups of four to discuss the Scripture passage.

- What do the words from Jeremiah say to you about your connection to your city?
- What does it mean for your church to be the light of the world?

Making it Personal:

Who is Tony? Or is it Toni? When we see the skeleton at the end of this episode we don't know who this person was. Race, gender, and age are not readily apparent. Chuck says, "God loves Tony(i), period. So we should too." In this statement we find a powerful message of love and grace. After all...

God
loves
each
of
us.
Period.

And it's that love that compels us to "love our neighbors as we love ourselves."

- What does this say about the ministry of your church?
- In what ways is God speaking to you this day?