

10. Luke 5:1-11. It may be helpful to have someone read the entire section so that people know the story. Did people notice in the English reading that there were two different Greek words for partners? (Of course not.) Given the previous discussion on *koinonia*, what might the differences be between *metochois* and *koinonoī*? (It would appear that Simon Peter, James and John were in one boat – owned by their *koinonia* partnership, and there were other fishermen in boats that were *metochois* partners.)

11. Explore what being in a fishing partnership might mean. Answers may include; capital investment, repairs to boat and nets, cleaning up, risking storms, supporting each other, working as a team.

12. The last two questions try to summarise the study so far – given all that has been talked about, how would they define *koinonia* partnership.

The next study is going to explore in greater depth four elements of *koinonia* partnership – these may or may not have been raised in your discussion.

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## Exploring Koinonia Partnership in Action

## Leader's Guide One

The following instructions are designed to help you lead a study into the concept of *koinonia* partnership. Read through both the study and the handout so you are familiar with the material. This is not designed to find the answer – it is hoped that there will be plenty of discussion and a lot of different answers.

The questions below are open-ended – they seek to open up some discussion and as the group leader it is your role to prompt discussion, encourage involvement, and make sure that all opinions are respected. There are no right or wrong answers, so plenty of opportunity to explore with each other some of our experiences and thoughts.

There are no timelines given in this guide – you may like to think about that yourself in terms of the time the group has available.

1. Make sure that everyone in the group knows each other and knows the purpose of the study – to deepen an understanding of *koinonia* partnership.

*Koinonia* is found 19 times in the Greek New Testament, people might like to use the internet after the study and find all of the examples – but try to avoid that sort of detail too early.

2. The Greek word, **κοινωνία – koinonia**, will look foreign (“it looks all Greek to me”). Kappa, Omicron, Iota, Nu, Omega, Nu, Iota, Alpha. It would generally be pronounced *koy-nohn-ee-ah*. People may like to have a go at making the letters and sounding it out.

3. Unpack the image of a word/bucket – we can see the outside of a bucket, but may not always see what is inside. A physical word is limited in meaning by our own understanding. Use the examples of a person’s name (proper noun - does it fully convey meaning?), “tree” (noun - what sort, what size, how old?), “sleeping” (participle - fast asleep, napping, lying dormant?).

None of the words (buckets) are able to convey the full meaning that exists within. Our interpretation is affected by our own experience – how might “tree” be interpreted in other countries? What about “winter”?

4. Translating non-English words adds an extra element into the mix. We can’t tip all of the contents of one word (bucket) into another. What does “*whanau*” really mean? Is it more than family? What does family really mean? It often depends on our own family experience, values, age, and state of mind.

Hopefully the group has realized that words are simply convenient holders of an idea that has so much more meaning than can be conveyed in a few letters strung together. So in to *koinonia*....

5. The next task is to have the group explore themselves what *koinonia* may mean. The approach is to use a number of biblical texts and allow them to give meaning to the word. It is a quite deliberate step to avoid going to a Greek dictionary and getting a definition. Take time on each verse and get people to write down their contextual meaning – alone or on a sheet. As the group leader you may well have to challenge people’s assumptions and have them explore the meaning from the text rather than from their own memory/experience – and certainly discourage them from looking up the verse in their own bibles and getting ‘the proper answer’.

6. The DISCUSS section allows two areas for discussion based on the collective understanding of *koinonia* gained from the verses. *Koinonia* becomes the bucket and we ask what sort of ideas will go into the bucket to give it meaning – partnership, communion, fellowship, sharing, ... others?

7. The Grace is familiar to most people, but there is still some discussion on how koinonia is translated – some people feel that “fellowship” is too masculine. There may be other versions of the bible that can be looked at as well.

8. Have a quick look at Philemon 1:6 in other versions and talk about “share” as a translation of *koinonia*.

9. The DISCUSS section prompts two questions for people to reflect on their use of the Grace.