

Community Part 2: Learning

How to Use

The goal with these discussion guides during the next few weeks, is that with your group or a few others, to have honest and authentic discussions around this idea of living life together as a “new family in Christ.” The hope is that this resource is not simply a study guide to further discuss the previous weekend’s message or a certain text in Scripture, but instead an application guide of how to further flesh out and live out God’s vision for biblical community. Each week will have a brief overview to read together, 2-3 discussion questions and a suggested practice to implement with your group.

The discussion questions have been crafted in a way to help get past the surface level response we can default to and to dig into honest and perhaps challenging conversations. You might not get through them all each week and that’s okay. Allow for some space for the Spirit to work and to give time for the conversation to reach a more intimate level. We would encourage you to invite the people you’re walking through these guides with to perhaps be a little more vulnerable than they might normally be. If your group size is large, consider breaking up into a few smaller groups to better facilitate honest conversations.

Our goal for the suggested practice each week is to help establish some new rhythms and ways to live out this idea of biblical community. Our challenge to you is to try these practices through the entire 9 weeks of this series. Perhaps at the end discuss with your group about how these practices went and what they might want to continue doing.

We would also encourage you to start each discussion with a time of prayer, inviting the Spirit to work in you and your group’s heart and minds around this topic of community.

Overview (Read this aloud together)

Leader: Read Acts 2:42-47

Acts 2 not only paints a picture of what the early church was like but sets a paradigm of what any church or group in any time or place should prioritize and pursue together. Centering a community around Scripture is essential but it is more than just to be informed or accumulate more knowledge about the Bible. The Bible reveals to us the story of God and the way of Jesus. It’s only when we locate ourselves within God’s redemptive plan and pursue the way of Jesus that the Word of God comes to life. We are meant to live out Scripture in real, honest and at-times messy relationships. We devote ourselves to God’s word to be conformed into the likeness of Christ and we cannot become more like Jesus without being in rooted community. Biblical community is meant to be more than a Bible study, it is meant to be an expression of God’s word lived out to one another and to the world around us.

Discussion Questions

What does it look like for us personally and as a group to be “devoted to the Apostles’ teaching?” Try to think beyond intellectually thinking about or knowing Scripture (not to say that isn’t important), but how to live that out in our lives.

What is the value in remaining rooted in a community, despite challenging circumstances or people? What are the challenges in staying committed?

Leader: Take some time to discuss the practice for the week as a group. Our encouragement to you is to start small and do something that is practical for where your group is at.

Practice for This Week

As a group, pick one aspect of how the early church practiced community together that you aren’t already doing or want to revisit. Implement it into the rhythm of your group, at least for the duration of the series:

- Implementing a rhythm to better “devote yourselves to” or live out Scripture.
- A rhythm of regular “fellowship,” spending time with one another simply being a family, allowing for space for relationships to deepen and have fun.
- Consider implementing communion into your rhythm, whether that is just the bread and the cup or sharing an entire meal together. Regardless of what you do, have some intentionality in what you do beyond just eating food together.
- Consider making prayer a bigger part of your time together, more than an opening or closing prayer.
- Practice intentional generosity or mission as a group. Consider something beyond a one-time event.
- A rhythm of worship as a group, whether that is singing a few songs together, making space to express gratitude towards God or another expression of worship that works for your group.