

How We Change: The Practice of Community

February 5-6, 2022: Dary Northrop

This provides about one hour of readings, discussion, and music.

As a springboard for discussion and further study, use the portions you find most valuable.

1. Living in community should be **understood**.

- Read **Acts 2:42-47, Psalm 133:1, John 13:34-35, and Colossians 3:12-14.**
- What were the practices of the early believers? How do you think God used this in establishing the Church?
- Read **Colossians 1:9-14**; discuss how these ideas strengthen the community of believers.

2. Living in community is about **willingness**.

- Read **Acts 2:43-44, James 5:16, Ephesians 4:11-13, Romans 12:4-8.**
 - What are some benefits of choosing to serve in community?
- Read **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*, Romans 15:7, Galatians 5:13-15, and 1 Thessalonians 1:4-10.** What ideas from these passages really stand out to you?
- Read **1 Corinthians 1:10.** How can we navigate disagreements - about church life, politics, the translation of the Bible or music choices - with **civility** and a willingness to learn, rather than following the way of the world by defending our own turf?

3. Living in community is about **invitation****.

- Read **Acts 2:44-47, John 6:44, and Galatians 4:4-7.**
 - What are some ways that we can better connect within the Church?
 - What can I do to be more inviting to others?

4. Living in community is about being **better together**.

Read **Acts 2:47, Revelation 12:10-11, Philippians 1:27, Ephesians 2:17-22, 1 Peter 2:4-10, and 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.** In what ways do you think these passages address the idea of being “better together” in the Body of Christ?

- Simple steps:
 - a) Be **open to others**.
 - b) Don't try to make everyone your **best friend**.
 - c) Put some time and energy into **relationships**.

Close with **Colossians 3:12-17** and this song/video:

- **“How Beautiful”** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVu5VZsCNOI>

***TIP:** Object lesson: Show the group a dab of vanilla extract on a small plate, along with a cookie. Ask, from your experience, which one is appealing to taste? Why is that? How does this illustrate “together?”

****TIP:** Consider splitting your group up for this segment into pairs or trios. Allow 6-10 minutes for breakout groups to talk about this section, and then rejoin as group, continuing with #4 and closing.

If you have a prayer need, please ask a friend here to pray with you, and to support you in prayer this week.