1 PET. 2:9-12, ROM. 12:9-13 - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

COMMUNITY LIFE - (SERMON MP3)

How have you been blessed by community group or a similar ministry in the past? In what ways can community groups help you in your Christian life? What are you most looking forward to about being back together in community groups?

We need God's help when it comes to our community life. Even though we live in the most connected culture in history, we may be the most individualistic. Do you agree? In what ways?

What choices do you make that reveal that you fall in line with our culture of individualism, independence and privacy? What motives fuel those choices? Areas to examine would be your interaction in conversation, with media, social networking, communication.

Is it important for believers to strive to have close fellowship with one another? Why or why not? Read Gen. 1:26, 2:18, John 17:20-23 and 1 Peter 2:9-10 for help.

Something keeps us from enjoying the unity with God and others that we were made to enjoy. Ultimately, what is it that keeps us from that close fellowship? Read Ecclesiastes 4:4-8 and prayerfully discern your own tendencies to drift from close fellowship with one another. Write down ways in each category that keep you from enjoying the community God intends for you.

- Envy v4 the competition to be better than those around us
- <u>Laziness v5</u> the entitlement that others must give us what they have
- <u>Dissatisfaction v6</u> the perpetual unrest for something better
- Work/Greed v7-8 the drive to buy instead of give or enjoy

Our only hope for the kind of community that God intends for us is found in the transforming power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. God must make us into a community so that we can enjoy community. The gospel is not merely a story of salvation from something (sin, wrath, death, Satan), but it is also an account of salvation to something (His commission) and into something (His family).

- What is the basis for this community? How is it formed? What is it made up of? See Eph. 2:15b-22, 1 Peter 2:9-10. How does that basis affect how we can and must interact with one with another? What commonalities unite us? (1 Cor 6:9-11)
- How does the the gospel give us victory in our failures in community? (Contrast with your answers above: Envy, laziness, dissatisfaction, work/ greed.)

We use a picture of a house to describe the way we are to live with those that are part of Gospel Grace Church. Take a moment to think through each room as a group.

Dining Room - INSTRUCTING The word is our life, and we must speak it and share it one with another. In the dining room, we have guests over and share food and conversation together. In biblical community, we share literal food together as well as the food of studying, listening to, and speaking the word to one another. Each of us prepares a part of the meal of the Word and we share it with one another. (Acts 2:42, Matthew 4:4)

Read Proverbs 10:11, Eph 4: 15-16. Col 3:16. Is your hearing of the Word completely dependent on the Pastors? List a few ways that you are to give and receive the word.

•	What practical ways do you as a member of a community group need to grow in your application of this prigroup. Think broader than Wednesday nights.	inciple? Brainstorm several ideas as a	
rooms, w commun	com - CARING The gospel causes us both to care for the needs of those around us and to open up about the share our lives with others, spending time with one another, laughing at stories, working through difficulties ity we share our lives by practicing hospitality, listening to each other, offering words of encouragement and Cor. 12:25-27.	es and rejoicing in triumphs. In biblical	
•	How are believers to care for one another? Read the following list of one another commands. Circle the ones you struggle most with. Star the ones you sense God has gifted you specifically in. We are commanded to "love, be at peace with, show hospitality to, honor, do not judge, bear the burdens of, forgive, be kind, submit, do not lie to, do not speak evil to, pray for, be likeminded with, do not hold a grudge, highly esteem, do not be partial to, encourage, teach, and do good to one another." For extra study, trace prohibitions and commands, tangible and intangible, active and passive.		
•	How can active involvement in this group help you better apply these verses?		
Basement - DISCIPLING In our basements, we learn and practice our skills. We hone those skills from each other by participating together in a task. In Christian community, trained leaders welcome others into their skills. Servants are discipled by one life touching another in mutual participation of ministry. As God-given gifts are identified, they are employed for service for the benefit and blessing of the whole Body. (Matt. 28:19-20, 1 Pet. 4:10)			
•	Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-17. How does Paul describe discipleship?		
•	According to 1 Timothy 4:12-16 what is to be the content of discipleship or to put it another way what should you be striving to pass on to someone you are discipling?		
home. In commun	brch - PROCLAIMING Community reaches out. From our front porches, we welcome others into our biblical community, we proclaim the gospel through our words and actions both to those outside ity and those already inside it. We invite others to join us in community and display living, Christlike love nother in front of those we welcome in. (John 13:35, Matthew 5:14-16, 1 John 4:12)	PRAYER REQUESTS	
•	What is the reason according to 1 John 4:12 that believers are to love one another? Why is it important that non-Christians observe Christian community?		
•	Interact with the following quote. "Let [unbeliever'] experience the life of Christian community. The church is the home in which God dwells by his SpiritLet our relationships provoke questions. And don't worry if your church life is sometimes less perfect than it should be! We do not witness to good works, but to the grace of God. Our commitment to one another despite our differences and our grace towards one another's failures are more eloquent testimony to the grace of God than any pretense at perfection." - Tim Chester & Steve Timmis		
•	How should God's design for Christian community impact the way you think about your community group and evangelism?		