



Introduction

This special message about a Vision for Biblical Community is intended to cause us to dig deeper into God's word and enable us to see the importance of doing life together as opposed to remaining isolated, anonymous and unknown. The distorted quest for individualism aided by social media tools has ironically created a generation of people more lonely, depressed and disconnected than ever. As image bearers of God we were made for relationships found in community.

The early church met in large groups to worship publicly and also met in homes enjoying meals, studying the bible, praying and caring for each other (Acts 2:46). It is in these smaller pockets of community that the present day church has neglected this rhythm of life together and, as a result, has suffered. Below you will find several scriptures that your group will read and discuss. There may be more scriptures and ensuing dialogue that may occur so pace yourself and do not worry if you get through them all.

Read/Observe/Interpret

Read Gen. 1:26,27 - Biblical community begins with God who exists in eternal and perfect community as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit who has eternally existed in relationship with one another as one God in three persons (John 1). **Why is the trinitarian nature of God foundational to all other community?**

Read 1 Peter 2:9-12 - A Christ-centered community worships together and encourages one another to proclaim the greatness of Jesus. **According to this passage what are some of unique characteristics of a community of believers?** (e.g. You have received mercy from God, vs.10)

Read through as many of the below scriptures as time allows asking the question, **"How is biblical community enabled or destroyed by obeying or disobeying these scriptures?"**

Hebrews 10:24-25 Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another.

John 13:34 Love one another.

Romans 12:10 Give preference to one another.

Colossians 3:13 Forgive one another.

1 Thessalonians 4:8 Comfort one another.

Community Group Discussion

- Read the passage together out loud.
- Involve your group by asking/answering the study questions, taking the time to share.
- Ask for prayer requests and be sure to pray together.

Family Discussion

- Have your child/children read the passage aloud, if old enough otherwise you read it aloud.
- Involve them by asking questions.
- Ask for prayer requests and invite them to pray together as a family.



A great way to use of these notes is to start/join a Community Group

These notes can be used for personal bible study, yet, another way would be to invite some people together. We call these intentional gatherings, 'Community Groups'.

What is a Community Group?

Community Groups are small gatherings of believers (non-believers welcomed too!) that meet regularly for accountability, friendship, study of the Bible and prayer. Community Groups are an essential part of the mission of Calvary SLO Church as they are a place where we wrestle with the truths of the Bible and encourage one another toward the life God intends. Each community group is unique and molded by the people who attend it. Most community groups gather weekly and involve food, dialog, prayer, discussion for applying the Bible to practical living, and loving service to one-another. They're meant to be an organic and authentic expression of the church, actively living like the body of Jesus.

Why should I join/start a Community Group?

God is a Trinitarian God who is revealed as one in three persons: Father, Son and Spirit. We've been made to image God, which means we're designed for community & friendship. We often suffer when we're not in community, due to the brokenness of life, complexity of this world and the temptation to isolate ourselves. We encourage you to gather with a small group of friends, family or roommates on a weekly basis and use these discussion notes to press deeper into God.

How do I join the Calvary SLO Community Group eco-system?

We're enthusiastic about all forms of biblical community, however there are definite benefits to joining with the Calvary SLO Community Group (CG) eco-system. In short, the benefits are:

- **Training:** We have trainings intent on equipping leaders.
- **Support:** Each CG leader is assigned a coach to provide assistance and ongoing support.
- **Visibility:** CG's are promoted via the bulletin, website & given access to The City (our online social network).

To join all you have to do is sign up for the next upcoming training! Info: pastor James: james@calvaryslo.com.