

Getting To Know You

1. How would you define authentic community? What are the essentials? Explain.
2. What has been your experience with biblical community? Explain.
3. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "Christian brotherhood is not an ideal which we must realize; it is rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate. The more clearly we learn to recognize that the ground and strength and promise of all our fellowship is in Jesus Christ alone, the more serenely shall we think of our fellowship and pray and hope for it". Thoughts? Agree? Disagree?
4. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ. No Christian community is more or less than this". Thoughts? Agree? Disagree?
5. Billy Graham said, "Remember: He wants your fellowship, and He has done everything possible to make it a reality. He has forgiven your sins, at the cost of His own dear Son. He has given you His Word, and the priceless privilege of prayer and worship". Thoughts? Agree? Disagree?
6. Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Digging Deeper

1. How were we created? What is your understanding of Imago Dei (Image of God)? If we don't understand how we were created/designed, how can we be who we were created to be? Explain. What are the attributes or qualities that exist within the Godhead (Trinity)? If God has always existed in perfect relationship, fellowship, community, and communion with each other and we are created in His image, why would we think that we can be absent from relationships, fellowship, community, and communion? How are we created for connection? Explain.
2. In the Old Testament what biblical community/ies were established? In the New Testament what biblical community/ies were established? Would the Bible make any sense if you removed community from it? Explain. Can we remove ourselves from community and fulfill what God has called us to? Explain.

What do we miss out on if we are not actively engaged in community? Why is it common for believers to live out their faith in independently or in isolation? Is this biblical? Explain.

3. When you think of community, what verses or texts come to mind? Which ones resonate with you the most? What do the following verses say about community:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Matthew 18:20 & 22:37-40; Romans 12:3-13; 1 Corinthians 12:25-27; Galatians 6:2; Hebrews 10:24-25

Is a Christian apart from community a contradiction? Explain. Do you agree that there are certain things that God cannot teach you apart from relationships with others? Explain.

4. What does the 1st Century Church do after the Holy Spirit comes upon them? What does Acts 2:42-47 say? Why were the Apostles teachings (later will become scripture/cannon) so important? What was it pointing people to? What did Jesus promise the disciples in John 14? How is Acts 2 a fulfillment of that promise? How is Acts 2 a fulfillment of Joel 2? Explain.

At Cross Church, being biblical is one of our core values. Why is the Bible/scripture foundational for everything we do? What example did the 1st century church establish for us?

What is Koinonia? What does this look like in a biblical community? What is involved? Were we designed for anything short of this? Explain. If we have a proper understanding of koinonia how does that change our view of biblical community and communion? How is this a reflection of the Godhead?

How often do you pray for others? How important was prayer for the 1st century church? Why is corporate prayer so powerful? What does Jesus say in Matthew 18:20?

Why are Bible Groups so important? Why is it essential that all of our Bible Groups study the Word of God, pray, and do life together? How is your Bible Group a blessing to you?

5. What is Pentecost? What is it a celebration of? What does Ephesians 1:13-14 say? Why is Pentecost (festival of weeks) symbolic for what happens in Acts 2 (Holy Spirit coming upon the first believers)?

How does Jesus unite us? In what ways does He tear down language, ethnic, social, & cultural barriers? How were all of those barriers tore down in Acts 2?

6. Do unhealthy things grow? Why should the church grow both numerically and spiritually (quality & quantity)? If it doesn't grow how does it display potential issues? Do any of us ever arrive spiritually? Why is spiritual formation a continual process? Explain

Growing Closer

1. Who is someone you shared the gospel with this week?
2. What have you been reading in your quiet times?
3. What has God been teaching you?