

LEADER GUIDE – SESSION 5

About this session: COMMUNITY

Throughout scripture, we find wisdom, insight, and commands that emphasize the importance of community. In fact, when Jesus was asked what the single most important command is, he responded with two: love God and love others. In doing both of these, we live as God intended. By now you may have noticed members of your group feeling comfortable enough to open up and experience the Holy Spirit's transformative work through community. And if that doesn't seem to be apparent yet, be assured that God is undoubtedly working in the hearts of his people.

As you lead this week, pay attention to the connections that have been made and the good works that God has done through your small group!

NEXT WEEK... THE POTLOCK!

This is the second to last week of RelationShifts groups and the LAST week of the RelationShifts sermon series... That means next week there will be no video and the questions will be completely optional. Instead, the focus will be on putting into practice what this week (and this series) is all about: COMMUNITY. And there's no better way to experience community than with food!

If you haven't yet, figure out where you're meeting and who is bringing what for the potluck next week - Main Dishes? Sides? Desserts? Drinks (non-alcoholic please, or I'll get in trouble!)? Avoid duplicate dishes by assigning food categories or having a sign-up sheet so everyone knows who's bringing what!

Getting Started

Ice Breaker Idea:

What has been one of your favorite games to play in your life (sports, cards, board games, ANY kind of game!) and why?

If your group is large, you can answer this question in groups of 2-3.

Take It In (Watch the Video):

- *write out your notes*

Talk About it!

Some questions may be best discussed in "sub-groups" (i.e. 2-4) because it gives everyone a chance to share while keeping the total length of discussion about the same. As you review the questions ahead of time, see if there are any that you think would be best in sub-groups.

1. Which of the three SHIFTS from the video stood out to you the most and why?
2. Read **Genesis 1:26-27** and discuss;
 - a. How does the image of God as Three in One - Trinity - impact your understanding of who you are meant to be? Remembering the grand story of the scriptures - share one moment of community from the Bible that stands out to you. Just share the gist of it from memory; you don't have to look it up.
3. Read **Acts 2:42-43** and discuss;
 - a. Which of the four 'devotions' do you want/need to make more commitment to? Why does it matter so much to cultivate real community with your spiritual family?
4. Read **Hebrews 10:23** and discuss;
 - a. In the message, we were reminded of many elements of the hope we affirm. What is one element of the hope we affirm in Christ that you love and value, and why? How do you go about holding on to the hope we affirm? What challenges do you face as you attempt to hold on to that hope?
5. Read **Hebrews 10:24** and discuss;
 - a. Share about a believer who has motivated you - to love, and to good works, and what that led to in your life. What would it look like for you to do that for other believers? What does doing that require?
6. Read **Hebrews 10:25** and discuss;
 - a. In the message, we heard about four distinct kinds of 'meeting together' modeled by Jesus; how have you experienced God's goodness through 'meeting together'?
 - b. What wars against 'meeting together' -- what's the 'competition'? What happens when we do 'neglect our meeting together'? What happens when you don't work on creating community with your church Body - to you, and to others?
7. Read **Hebrews 10:25** (again)
 - a. Share about a time when being connected in your spiritual community in Christ helped you to experience deep encouragement. What step do you feel Holy Spirit prompting you to take to give and create more encouragement in our community in Christ? Share a couple of steps you might take to increase the strength of your spiritual community in the church Body.