

COMMUNITY

Get Connected

September 17, 2017

Pastor Scott Wieking

“God’s aim in human history is the creation of an all-inclusive community of loving persons with God himself as its primary sustainer and most glorious inhabitant.”
Dallas Willard

God and Starbucks

“I often found myself preferring the company of people outside my congregation, men and women who did not follow Jesus. Or worse, preferring the company of my sovereign self. But I soon found that my preferences were honored by neither Scripture nor Jesus. I didn’t come to the conviction easily, but finally there was no getting around it: there can be no maturity in the spiritual life, no obedience in following Jesus, no wholeness in the Christian life apart from an immersion and embrace of community. I am not myself by myself. Community, not the highly vaunted individualism of our culture, is the setting in which Christ is at play.
Eugene Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places*

Ephesians 4:1-6

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

COMMUNITY is our destiny.

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called...”

Calling –

COMMUNITY is a sure-fire investment.

“... eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Eager –

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

COMMUNITY finds its roots in the center of the universe.

There is one body and one Spirit -- just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call — ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

COMMUNITY Busters and Builders

*“Those who love their dream of a Christian community more than the Christian community itself become destroyers of that Christian community even though their personal intentions may be ever so honest, earnest, and sacrificial. God hates this wishful dreaming because it makes the dreamer proud and pretentious.... Because God already has laid the only foundation of our community, because God has united us in one body with other Christians in Jesus Christ long before we entered into common life with them, we enter into that life together with other Christians, not as those who make demands, but as those who thankfully receive.... We do not complain about what God does not give us; rather we are thankful for what God does give us daily. Christian community is not an ideal we have to realize, but 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 community is in Jesus Christ alone, the more calmly we will learn to think about our community and pray and hope for it.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together**

Digging Deeper into Community

This week’s passages:

Monday – Ephesians 4:1-6

Tuesday – Ephesians 4:7-16

Wednesday – Philippians 2:1-4

Thursday – Philippians 2:5-11

Friday – Philippians 2:12-18

Weekend – Review the quote by Bonhoeffer (above) and the most meaningful passages of the week.

This Week’s Big Idea: Community is the work of the Spirit but we have an urgent part to play.

Each day this week you are invited to read the day’s passage and then respond to the following questions. Take special note of what God’s word says about our Christian community. You might find it beneficial to use a journal or notebook to record insights.

1. **Read** the passage prayerfully, listening for the voice of God and asking him to speak to you.
2. **Record** or write down the word, phrase, or verse that God impresses upon you.
3. **Reflect** and write down what it is about this word, phrase or verse that is meaningful to you.
4. **Respond** by writing a prayer or recording what it is that you think the Lord wants you to do in response to his word (“*Be doers of the word and not hearers only*” James 1:22).