

Life Group Topic #20 – Covenant Community

WELCOME: (15 minutes)

Are you watching World Cup? Who are you cheering for?
Do you follow any sports? Why or why not?

WORSHIP: (15 minutes)

Use whatever means possible to turn the group's attention to the wonder and majesty of our God- including music, prayer, meditation on the Psalms, and other art forms.

WORD APPLICATION: (45 minutes)

Briefly read or paraphrase the following sermon summary before moving to the heart of this section: the discussion around the application questions.

Central to the God's redemptive work in the world is bringing people into relationship with each other. Even before "the fall," the one thing that was "not good" was Adam being alone. God has created us to be in relationship with each other and to help each other.

In both the story of Israel, and the story of the church, salvation results in the forming of a new community. The Church is a **covenant** community sealed by the work of Jesus on the cross. Covenant is a word which speaks of unbreakable relationship loyalty – it is a binding together of people in such a way that each party will forever be defined by the relationship.

As a Church we have, by definition, entered into covenant with God **and** with each other.

We are called to be a community of love.

We are called to place the needs of others and the needs of the community above our own.

Within the covenant relationship we have the privilege to assert needs and the responsibility to yield to the needs of others. If both of these relational aspects are not in place there is break down of relationship and subsequently community.

Gathering on Sunday is one way in which we demonstrate our relational loyalty to God and to each other.

Just as creating a community is a result of God's acts of salvation in the world it is also the location in which we experience ongoing salvation – both through the power and presence of God and human relationships.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with them" Matt. 18:20 (NIV)

It is only as a gathered body that we are able to most fully reflect and also experience the person Jesus and God's plan for the world.

In a culture where the individual reigns supreme should not the people of God, as demonstrated in church attendance, perhaps demonstrate a different priority?

Word Application Questions:

Please keep in mind that these questions are meant as catalysts designed to get the group talking about life application.

Acts 2:42-47

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common.

⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- 1. How do react to, or resonate with, this description of Church?**
- 2. What level of priority is Sunday morning? Why?**
- 3. What expectations, positive or negative, do I bring?**
- 4. Do I have a sense of relational obligation to the SAC community?**
- 5. Am I willing/able to assert my needs in the community?**
- 6. Am I willing to yield to the needs of others and the good of the community?**
- 7. What does this look like in real life?**
- 8. How do I experience salvation through community?**

WITNESS: (15 minutes)

This section is a vision-casting time designed to get the group strategizing and making concrete plans towards reaching outward to a lost world. Relational outreach always has the goal of ultimately enfolding those we reach into the Life Group.

How do we corporately reflect Jesus? Would someone knowing our group see Jesus?