

Formation Hour

The Community Practice

Cultivating Community in the Way of Jesus

Session 4, Stay Together to Grow

September 28, 2025



We'll begin with a video together in the sanctuary.
We will then break into our small groups for discussion and community.

Key Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3v1-4

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings?

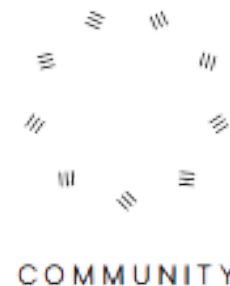
Definition of Community Practice: The intentional discipline of actively building highly relational, joyfully-connected, kinship groups that eat and laugh and pray and worship and follow Jesus together as a family.

Video Notes:

Full Study Guide
for sessions 1-4



Full Video
Session 4 (33



Discussion Questions:

Staying In Community Questions

1. Share your experience confessing your sins this week, if you did. How did it go?
2. Did you sense it affecting your sense of shame or disconnection from God?
3. What would need to happen for you to make confession a more regular rhythm in your life?
4. What has this experience shown you about how to confess and how to receive someone else's confession well?
5. Bonhoeffer said that we must not love "the dream of community" more than actual community. Have you experienced this yourself or seen it impact someone else?
6. What stood out to you about the six-stage Cycle of Community (Honeymoon, Apathy, Frustration, Acceptance, Ending/Reengagement, Health)?
7. What did you make of the statement that long-term relationships are the vehicle for growth in the Christian life?
8. What would be the primary challenges or temptations you face to staying in community?
9. Which of the three skills (dealing with conflict, learning to forgive, and commitment to apprenticeship under Jesus) is most challenging to you?

Closing prayer, End your time together by praying this liturgy:

Help us Father, to be real with each other, to be real about what it means to be one body, and to stay in persevering love with one another as we pursue your presence, your kingdom, your love. Amen.

Reach Exercise:

Consider what's next for you:

Next, what next steps do you sense the Spirit inviting you to take to move toward this vision? This could be something like, get coffee with an acquaintance to see if they could become a closer friend; invite a family over for dinner; talk to your friends about forming a kinship group or table community; meeting with a confessor, etc. They are likely small.

Write down 2-3 next steps:



Ideas for Further Personal Practice

You are not going to find and form a kinship group in four weeks. This short Practice is only designed to get you moving on a lifelong journey. The weekly rhythm of sharing a meal that you've been practicing is meant to be integrated into your Rule of Life, should you so choose. You may choose to make a weekly community meal a rhythmic part of your discipleship, or you may want to find another pathway into community. Where you go from here is entirely up to you, but here are a few ideas of how you could go deeper into community.

01 Go on retreat with your group: find a cabin in the woods, book an Airbnb in the sun, or reserve space at a local retreat center, and go away for a few days with your community. Find something meaningful to fill your time — hearing from an older, wiser mentor in the faith, hosting deep conversations, prophetically praying over each other, etc. Make sure you eat lots of meals and find time to play together to joyfully connect.

02 Go on vacation together: go camping or take a road trip or do whatever you love to do to rest, but try doing it together as a community.

03 Build regular touch points into your weekly routine: repurpose things you already do to serve a double function. Go to the gym with another community member. Schedule a standing Saturday morning group run or play date at the park. Sit together at church. Join the same book club. Take an online course together.

04 Host sabbath dinners: start inviting over a few close friends or family you can really relax with for a sabbath feast. Make it celebratory. Practice gratitude, share highlights of the week, sing a song, sit around a fire pit, rejoice together in God.

05 Begin therapy: find a trusted, Christian counselor and begin the journey of healing from your past in order to more deeply enter into relationships of mutual trust and love.

06 Go through more Practices together: visit practicingtheway.org to consider running the Practicing the Way course or another one of our nine Practices.

07 Move closer to each other: consider moving to be closer to brothers and sisters you sense God is spiritually adopting you to. Community is all about proximity. The closer you are, the easier and more spontaneous life together can actually be. The farther apart, the most difficult. If appropriate, consider becoming roommates or moving into the same apartment complex or onto the same street or living in multi-generational housing or more radical ideas like co-housing or homesteading.