

COMMUNITY

Part One

Our goal is to move from isolation to community, from attempting to live our Christian life alone to living it together. What does this kind of relational Christianity look like? Community doesn't just happen when people gather—it takes great effort to establish community, and even greater effort to maintain it and deepen it. It requires personal risk—the risk of letting others into your inner world. The purpose of this session is to explore how to create this kind of community.

1. Agree or disagree?

You cannot become a spiritually healthy person without being in a spiritually healthy community.

A working definition: **Christian community = “living in spiritual interdependence”**

2. What kinds of personal things (areas) do men have difficulty honestly and openly sharing in a group setting? (What are we reticent to reveal about ourselves? ie. areas of one's inner life; sensitive and self-revealing subjects, etc)

- e.g., fears, flaws...
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3. What keeps genuine (non-superficial, heart-level) community from developing in a men's small group? (What are the barriers we men might have to overcome to experience close relationships in a small group?)

- e.g., fear of rejection, criticism, judgement...
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What examples of responses or reactions to our personal sharing could cause us to pull back or shut down from disclosing our real selves in a small group?

- e.g., instant fix: (“Oh, that's easy... Here's what you should do.”)
- e.g., one-upmanship: (“You think *that's* bad... I had an experience...”)
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