



Empowering People to Change the World

The Power of Community, Part 2

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PP Better Together – The Power of Community, part 2

- Introduction and personal story.
- Psalm 68:6, says that *“God sets the lonely in families.”*
- The word “lonely” in this verse means “solitary”, “isolated”, “friendless”, or “desolate.” God’s remedy when we find ourselves in this place, is to come home, to be part of something bigger than ourselves, to be in relationship with others, to be in family, to be in community.

Turn to Ecclesiastes 4:9-12,

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:
If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.
Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?
Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

- The word “better” in the original language means, beautiful, beneficial, the best, cheerful, and festive.
- The bible says that *“iron sharpens iron”*(Proverbs 27:17).
 - In community, we sharpen each other. We learn how to encourage, prefer, value, and esteem those around us.
 - I do not believe we can become all that God intends for us to become, without the Power of Community.

The Road Community Group testimony:

“It’s so easy to feel unknown, unsupported, and alone, even when you’re in a place you like, surrounded by lots of people. Our Community Group has shared God’s love in ways that have helped ease the feelings that come with being unknown or unseen. We are experiencing a deep sense of belonging and acceptance as we vulnerably share our lives with each other. As we meet together, we are becoming more familiar with the kindness and mercy of God. Even with our imperfections, we give each other biblical counsel and encouragement in our trials. We laugh and have fun every time we meet. We see a little of God’s love and joy for us, through the words and the actions of human friendship.”

PP “He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us” (2 Corinthians 1:4.)

- Part of living on planet earth includes going through difficulties and suffering, but as believers, we get to experience His comfort during those times.
- That’s what separates us from the world.
- And then we get to share that comfort with each other, in community.

The Road Community Group testimony:

“Our Community Group has been a life-altering experience for my wife and me. Amid the challenges of parenthood and job changes, it became our refuge. We evolved from acquaintances to cherished friends, bound by shared struggles and triumphs. The fellowship with others even fortified our relationship as a married couple. We faced challenges united, closer than ever. Our activities – hiking, camping, meals – knit us together with joy and shared moments. Support ran deep, from house projects to crisis times. During our darkest hours, our group’s unwavering support and comfort, helped us guide our son through two suicide attempts, showcasing the power of human connection. Our group’s spiritual growth was equally remarkable. Men deepened their relationships with God, transforming simple hikes into profound prayer moments. This journey has woven an unbreakable tapestry of connection, support, and faith, an ongoing source of strength and inspiration.”

PP “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

- One of God’s most precious gifts to us is friends who encourage us and lovingly challenge us to *keep going*.

The Road Community Group testimony:

“A woman in our group was living in a horrific situation in which the lady upstairs made unbearable noise all night long. Our dear sister could get no sleep and it was tearing her down to exhaustion. Being a single woman without a job, tied to a lease with an unresponsive landlord, she had no options for a solution. We prayed and prayed as a group. Then a relative out east invited her to move into the small apartment attached to their house. After more prayer, she decided to make the move. Our group worked hard to help her pack up and load a U-Haul. One of our guys then drove the truck for three days across the country to get her moved. At the going away party, each of us wrote on a 4x6 card and read aloud to her what we

appreciate about her. Love flowed and many tears were shed as we sent her off into God's next adventure for her. The highlight of our group are the rich times we've had in prayer, when we've seen God do what only He can do. He works and answers our prayers in huge ways."

PP "You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house" (Acts 20:20.)

- Community Groups are God's idea — they are His plan — to accomplish His purpose.
- A brief review of Community Groups from biblical times to the present.
- Real transformation, genuine healing, positive constructive change, and powerful equipping, most effectively happen in the context of safety, attachment, joy, and love.
- A genuine, community of blood-stained allies.

The Road Community Group testimony:

"My wife and I joined our Community Group in 2022. It has been a great blessing to us. We meet usually twice a month for dinner, fellowship, devotions, prayer and sometimes Holy Communion, at one of our rotating homes. What we love most about our group is the undeniable love we all have for Jesus. We run after God together with our whole hearts, using the Word of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit to guide us. We have grown to love each other as brothers and sisters, true blood-stained allies. We would do anything for each other. We laugh, we cry, we pray, and through it all we have joy! It is clear that we all love our children and grandchildren beyond measure, and they are the focus of much of our prayer. God answers our prayers in amazing ways.

We recently prayed for one of our members whose adult daughter told her that same day, that she wanted nothing more to do with her. Our prayers ended at 11 P.M. and at 2:30 A.M., three and a half hours later, her daughter called crying and said, "I miss my mom and I don't want to be untethered from the past. Can you let me have another chance? Can we please try to talk?"

We know more about each other's struggles than most of our families. We walk each other through the tough stuff. What happens in the group...stays within the group. We have become family - beloved family! Praise God who is the author of relationship through Christ Jesus!"

PP “The Road @ Chapel Hills is on a road less traveled. We are not building a church that looks and feels like any other church. I want The Road to be a Word and Spirit church where people feel loved, cared for, and equipped. Our Community Groups are a key part of this journey.” Pastor Steve Holt

Turn to Acts 2:42:

“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Note: Can you please put these next 4 bullets (pillars) on one slide and have them come up one at a time. Perhaps add a graphic that shows four Roman or Greek columns?

We have built our Community Group ministry at The Road on four pillars:

PP Apostle's teaching

- The Apostles teaching is our plumbline for life — it is the Word of God.
- The Greek word for “teaching” is “*did akh AY*” which means “sound doctrine” or “moral instruction” on how to live.
- The Apostles “teaching” is applying His truth to our lives so that we can live in a way that is pleasing to Him. This happens so powerfully as we discuss it together in Community Groups.
- I encourage using the Sunday sermon as a launching point for discussion.

PP Fellowship

- The Greek word here is “*koinonia*” which means “partnership, shared vision, community and belonging.”
- Enjoying each other's company, sharing life together, bearing each other's burdens.
- This is spurring one another on to love and good works.
- Four characteristics found in a community of blood-stained allies:
 - Listen well,

- Acknowledge emotions,
- Speak truth in love,
- Help walk others to freedom and maturity.

PP Breaking of Bread

- The Greek word for “bread” is “AR tos” which is used in the New Testament for both the Lord’s Supper and for sharing a meal together.
- The first and most powerful is the Lord’s Supper.
 - There is something profound that happens when we come together in faith, to share Holy Communion. I believe it focuses us on what’s important and it releases Kingdom possibilities in our lives and in the lives of those around us.
 - Personal stories.
 - Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of me.” “DO THIS,” “Remember.”
- The second use of this word in the New Testament is for sharing a meal together.
 - Sharing meals with other believers is one of the best ways to connect. It breaks down walls and helps build genuine community.
- I strongly encourage both in our small group gatherings.

PP Prayer

- Prayer is perhaps the most important part of all our Community Group gatherings.
- At each meeting there is a time focused prayer. We like to leave ample time to pray for the unique needs of every person

The Road Community Group testimony:

“Recently we all went to see the movie “Sound of Freedom” and after the movie we gathered in a circle outside the theater, held hands and prayed for the sex trafficked children, their families, amongst other things. It felt so good to be a part of a group of believers that are like minded. Together in unity, we can lift up the things that grieve our heavenly Father.”

- We are encouraging every Community Group to also reach out to their neighborhoods and the world around them, to make a difference together for the

Kingdom of God. Groups are taking flags, art, and worship to City parks for outreach.

- Others are considering neighborhood block parties, serving the homeless in soup kitchens or working together to pray and distribute food at local food banks.

The Road Community Group testimony:

“In our Community Group we have accepted the challenge to travel across Colorado together, from its four corners to its very center, while declaring our dependence on Almighty God. We are crying out for repentance within the church, for fresh anointing to fall from heaven, for protection for every citizen in our state, and for the ushering in of a great Kingdom harvest. We are fasting, praying, worshipping, and participating in Holy Communion, on location, as we together anoint the ground, crying out to God, to breathe on us again.”

PP “The more genuine and deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and His work become the one and only thing that is vital between us.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

- Today we are commissioning thirteen new Community Group Leaders.
- They all went through training, background checks, interviews, reference checks, and much prayer, to present opportunities for every one of you.
- This semester, we have twenty-nine groups that still have space for you to join.
- This is all summarized in the flyer you were given as you came in this morning and it’s also on The Road website.
- You can sign up today, either online or at the tables in the lobby, but space is limited so please don’t hesitate.
- Our goal is for every person that calls The Road home to be connected in a vibrant Community Group.

Recent Community Group leader dream:

“This leader saw a huge influx of people needing discipleship in the near future. In the dream she became aware of our need to prepare for large groups of people who know nothing of God or the gospel. She saw lines of people waiting to get baptized. She saw a desperate need for more homes, more Community Groups to accommodate all of this.”

- God is calling some of you right now to consider leading a group. It's not great ability God is looking for, but rather availability. We will help you through the process. Please answer His call.
- Our next Community Group Leader training will be held on Saturday November 4, 2023. You can sign up for this training right now on the events page of The Road website.
- Prayer.
- Praise and worship time.

Discussion Questions for "The Power of Community, Part 2":

1. Have you ever experienced a time when you felt alone or disconnected, even when you were around people you liked? How would it feel to be connected in a small group of blood-stained allies where people have your back and care about you?
2. The passage from Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 talks about the strength of being together. How do you interpret the idea that "a cord of three strands is not quickly broken" in the context of community?
3. In the Bible, there's a verse from 2 Corinthians 1:4 that mentions how God comforts us in our troubles so that we can comfort others. How do you think being part of a Community Group allows us to comfort and support each other?
4. The speaker shared four characteristics found in a community of blood-stained allies, they listen well, acknowledge emotions, speak truth in love, and help walk others to freedom and maturity. Which of these come naturally to you? Which of these do you need to most work on?
5. The testimonies shared highlight the importance of deep connections and shared experiences within a Community Group. How do you think these strong relationships can positively impact various aspects of our lives, including spiritual growth, emotional support, and facing challenges?