

### ***Engaging the Scriptures in Community***

As we have seen over the past few weeks, it is important that we engage the Scriptures individually. This is an important aspect in how we are spiritually transformed. But we must not think that we are to ONLY engage the Scriptures individually; it is also something that we need to do in community with others. Engaging the Scriptures in community is another one of the means that God has given to us to receive the Word and have it transform our lives. What does it look like to engage the Scriptures in community? That's the focus of this week's study.

**Opening Question:** Who was one of your favorite teachers growing up and why?

Brian said:

Our pursuit of God is something that we were designed to do in community. This is certainly true when it comes to how we engage the Scriptures. If we only engage the Scriptures individually there can be real danger there. If we don't let the community of believers around us and the community of believers throughout history help inform how we understand the Scriptures, we are in a very dangerous place. Left to ourselves, we will come to the Word with our own biases and look at it through our own interpretive lens that has been shaped by our cultural background, our families, and many other factors such that we may fail to rightly understand God's Word.

1. What are some of the ways that it is possible to get off track if we only study the Scriptures on our own? Any examples?

**Read Acts 18:8-11; Eph. 4:11-13; Col. 1:28-29; 1 Timothy 4:13**

2. How do you see the principle, "God intends for us to receive Scripture through teachers," in these passages?
3. If these verses were all the information you had about the need for teachers in our lives, what conclusions would you make about their importance? Why?
4. What are some of the things that these passages say that the teaching of God's Word can accomplish?

**Read Acts 2:41-42, 17:10-11**

5. What insights do these passages give us about how we are to receive teaching?

**Read Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 4:15-16**

6. What do these passages say about a mutual engagement with the Scriptures/truth?

7. When it comes to speaking the truth in love, and teaching and admonishing one another, what are some principles that we should keep in mind to do so effectively?

8. As you reflect on your life, do you sense that you have the kinds of relationships that is allowing this mutual engagement with Scripture and truth to take place or do you sense there is a lack in this area?

9. What is your main take-away from this topic of engaging Scripture in community?