

Fruitful and Free: Abiding in Community

Acts 2:42-47

Sometimes growing up we get the message that the goal of life is to get to a point where we are independent and don't need other people. Certainly, there are aspects of maturing that mean we learn to stand on our own two feet, but God does not intend for us to go it alone when it comes to our faith. In fact, we simply cannot grow into what God wants us to be or do if we are not living in community. We will not experience the kind of fruitfulness nor the freedom that God has for us if we think our faith is something that just happens between Jesus and me. We need each other. We need community. Living in community is a huge part of living a life of consistently abiding in Jesus.

Opening Discussion: How has COVID-19 been disruptive to your ability to experience community?

Read Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37

1. How does Luke (the author of Acts) describe the early church?
2. How would you describe their experience of community?
3. What kind of fruitfulness did they experience?
4. Spiritual practices like prayer, reading Scripture, and fasting are important practices in our individual devotional lives. What do we gain when we also practice these in community with other believers?

5. The Bible not only describes community; it also prescribes things that we must do in community. The 'one anothers' of Scripture are actions that we are to engage in with each other. How might the following 'one anothers' help us grow in freedom and fruitfulness?

- Hebrews 3:12-13
- Galatians 6:1-2
- James 5:16
- Colossians 3:16
- Hebrews 10:24-25
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Brian said:

Reject the lie that faith is something that you do alone. If you are really going to go for this, you need to address your thinking. Do you believe that you need other believers - that they are of value to you? And on the flip side, do you see yourself as important to the well-being of others? You are! Part of our struggle is that we are influenced by our culture. Culturally, we tend to think we've arrived when we are self-sufficient; when we don't need anybody. This just isn't biblical. We were not designed to live like this.

6. Do you really believe that you need other believers? And, as well, that they need you? Explain.

7. What steps can you take right now to connect more deeply in community?

Practicing the Rhythms of Rooted



Daily Devotion: As you spend time in Proverbs this week as part of our 21 Days see if you can note any aspects of wisdom that we gain in community.



Prayer: Take time this week to pray and reflect on your experience of community. Are you living in community in such a way that the 'one anothers' are happening? Pray about ways that you might be able to deepen your experience of biblical community.