

Chapter 5

1) Where do change and growth in grace happen best?

Do you have significant relationships in Christian community that are helping you (and others) to change and grow in grace?

2) Read the woman's testimony about relationships on pages 63-64. Record your initial responses.

What *benefits* of community are illustrated?

What *limitations* of community are illustrated?

3) Explain the tension we live with regarding friendships.

Why do we *avoid* meaningful relationships?

Why do we *desire* meaningful relationships?

Give examples of how this tension reveals itself in your life.

How does this tension show up in the life of "Joe" (pages 65-66)?

4) What is the most important reason for community?

How does being created "in the image of God" impact our need for relationships?

How does the fall effect those relationships?

Read Genesis 3. Record the effects that sin had on man's relationship...

...with God.

...with man.

...with the created order.

5) What effect does the Gospel have on community?

In Ephesians 4:1-6, what does Paul call Christians to do in light of the Gospel?

How does that calling related to the Trinity?

What has the Trinity done to make us (Christians) one body?

How ought that effect how you view and act toward other believers, particularly in regard to building relationships?

Where are you struggling in this? succeeding?

6) What does the doctrine of “adoption” mean for Christian community?

What impact should Ephesians 2:14-22 have on our view of Christian community?

Does the Bible separate our personal devotion to Christ and our devotion to the church?

How does Acts 9:4 illustrate this?

7) Read the application questions in the last paragraph on page 71. Answer them in the space below.

Consider the bulleted list on page 71. Which of them apply to you?

8) Are relationships simple?

What is required in relationships?

What must happen to your value system for this to occur?

9) How does community relate to sanctification? Why is it necessary?

10) What “community” language is used in Ephesians 3:14-21?

In what ways has community helped you to “see” and “know” the love and power of God in Christ?

11) How ought Christian relationships to impact our sanctification (growth in holiness, purity)?

Explain the connection between grace, purity and community in Titus 2:11-14.

How does 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10 speak to the importance of community?

12) What do Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4 say about the use of our gifts in Christian community?

In what ways are you using your gifts to serve the body?

In what ways are you failing?

In what ways do you need to be served by the body?

13) How do the Lord’s Supper and Baptism speak to the importance of community in the Christian life?