

SESSION 4 | GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

GET STARTED

What are some things you like to do on your own? What are some things you like to do with others?

Who was your best friend growing up? What made that person such a good friend?

New Groups: *Getting To Know You* activity (pg. 130)

TAKE IT IN

Watch Session 4: Connecting To Community at mynorthside.com/ctu.

What encouraged or challenged you from the video and daily study guide this week?

Communion Experience: Complete before or after your group discussion (pg. 131)

TALK IT OVER

Read Genesis 1:26-27

God does not and cannot exist outside of community. Since we are created in His image, we are designed for community. We can do many things on our own, but following Jesus isn't one of them. **What's your primary feeling around living more deeply in community with other believers (excitement, hesitation, fear, some other feeling)? If you have spent time in community with other believers before, what is ONE benefit you have experienced?**

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

An 80+ year Harvard study came to the conclusion that strong relationships make us happier and healthier. It's not about how many relationships we have, but how good they are. The study also showed that people who are isolated tend to be less happy, get sick easier, experience faster mental decline, and live shorter lives than those who are more connected.¹⁰ **Do the results of the Harvard study surprise you? How have you experienced the effects of isolation on your health (mental, emotional, physical, spiritual, etc...)?**

Verse 9 reveals that in community we are more productive. **In what ways have you experienced the benefits of productivity in your relationships? As a group, how can we help each other be more productive?**

Verse 10 reveals that in community we can care for one another. **When have you received care from the relationships in your life? As a group, how can we intentionally care for one another?**

¹⁰ Robert Waldinger, *What Makes a Good Life? Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness*. TED, Dec. 2015, www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness.

Verse 11 reveals that in community we celebrate one another. **Who do you turn to when you need encouragement? As a group, how can we intentionally celebrate one another?**

Verse 12 reveals that in community we strengthen one another. **How have the relationships in your life strengthened your faith? As a group, how can we help strengthen our faith?**

Read Hebrews 10:24-25

Community is pivotal to developing ownership in our faith. This shifts us from being just a consumer to a contributor. **Think about the larger community of your church, how would you rate yourself using the scale below? How can you make a shift towards a contributor?**

Passive Consumer | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Engaged Contributor

Think about the smaller community of your group. **What difference does it make when we have ownership in our group? Using the examples below, how would you like to better own our group experience?**

Get to know everyone better	Come prepared (i.e. daily devotions)	Speak up during the discussion	Be consistent in attendance
Offer encouragement/ support in difficult times (text, card, meal, etc...)	Celebrate wins together	Bring snacks or make a meal	Host the group in your home
Pray at a group session		Lead a group session	Plan a social or serve project

LIVE IT OUT

Both the Bible and secular study agree that community is vital for our well-being. God designed us to live in relationship with others. When we invest in real friendships, we align with how God made us and we experience the blessings that come with it. But community and relationships are not easy. There are a million reasons not to take the risk of growing in community, but there is one great reason to choose it, God made us for it. Think about the relationships you have in and outside of your group. Whom might God be calling you to deepen your friendship(s) with this season? Pursue the answer and continue building community.

Daily Devotions: Take 15-30 minutes each day to dive into the *Connecting The Unconnected* daily devotions. Don't think of it as homework, but time growing alongside your Heavenly Father. Come ready to discuss what you are learning at the next group session.

Memorize: “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.” **Ecclesiastes 4:12**