

Sharing Stories • RESONANCE
“On Community”

Questions for Reflection & Discussion:

1. Define Christian community.

2. Why do we need Christian community? Why is it so important?

3. Why is it important to be around people who are different from ourselves? What are some of your own experiences with people who look, act, or believe differently than yourself?

4. What is your own personal community?

5. How would you describe a “real” Christian community? How is it the same or different from the communities you are currently a part of?

6. How have others supported you in your successes? In your times of need? How have you supported others in their successes and times of need?

7. How can a community be diverse and unified? Together without the expectation of sameness? How is this reflected in the imagery of Table Mountain?

Disciplines for Practice:

1. Presence

There is no secret code to crack in order to be in Christian community. As Dr. Oladipo put it, “we need to eat together, and play together.” Beginning to engage in Christian community can be as simple as being present with each other as we eat, play, pray, and live life together.

2. Practice CARE

CARE is an acronym that stands for Create hospitable space, Ask self awakening questions, Reflect theologically, Enact the next faithful step. This process helps us to start with listening which leads to reflection and brings us to action.

3. Sacrifice

Sometimes being in Christian community requires us to put others before ourselves. As Dr. Brinkley put it, It’s the understanding that “I have to give up something to maintain our relationship—I can’t always have it my way.”

4. Listen

Listening goes hand in hand with the earlier concept of presence. To be in Christian community with others we must be able to listen to the people around us without our own personal agenda getting in the way. Listen for the sake of listening, not so that you may respond.

Bible Passages to Consider:

1. Acts 8:26-40
2. Matthew 18:15-35
3. Matthew 6:9-13
4. Matthew 25:31-46
5. Hebrews 10:24-25
6. Ecclesiastes 4:8-12
7. Romans 12:3-8
8. 1 Corinthians 12:12-31
9. Philippians 2:3-11

Additional Resources to Consider:

1. The Good and Beautiful Community: Following the Spirit, Extending Grace, Demonstrating Love by James Bryan Smith
2. Life Together by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
3. Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster
4. Community by Henri Nouwen

5. Another Way: Living and Leading Change on Purpose by Stephen Lewis, Matthew Wesley Williams, Dori Baker