



**Message Topic:** Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Beauty of Community

**Message Date:** September 27, 2020

**Focus:** The beauty of God's gift of unity, and the blessing of living in community

**Primary biblical texts:** Psalm 133; Galatians 6:1–10

## **Introduction**

Thanks so much for being a part of a Community Group. Remember, for the next 8–10 weeks, our goal is to engage in conversations about the beautiful life that Jesus has called us to live out in this world. Each week, we will be unpacking an element of this life, and discussing how it looks in light of an example that Lead Pastor Christian Andrews will share. Each topic is paired with a historical figure who will show us one way to embody that week's topic. We are excited to continue this series of messages with you!

## **Purpose of Groups**

To engage with the ideas and scripture presented in the messages, to build connections with each other, and apply what we have learned to our lives.

## **Ground Rules**

As you gather each week, remember that the group is meant to have conversations, not to win arguments. There may be topics that challenge our deeply held viewpoints, and our natural inclination will be to protect ourselves. But, if we take a risk and attempt to listen and understand instead of dominate and defend, we will grow in our faith and in our beliefs.

## **Message Content**

*Review Message:* Christian shared this week that community is something God has given as a gift to enrich our lives. He held up the example of Dietrich Bonhoeffer as someone who helped others learn to live in community with one another. True community is a gift to the world. Bonhoeffer's book, "Life Together," starts with Psalm 133. It describes community that enriches and blesses those who participate in it like an expensive oil that anoints a priest or like the life giving water that miraculously falls in the desert to bring life to dry land. When we look closely at this Psalm, we see that there are four things that make community work: unity, diversity, forgiveness, and God's miraculous power.

### *Discussion Questions:*

1. What stood out to you from Bonhoeffer's life?
2. Where have you experienced or seen a picture of a community that is unified, diverse, forgiving, and is miraculous? Where have you seen the opposite?

## Scripture Study

In “Life Together,” Bonhoeffer also gives practical guidance on how to serve one another in community. Read each text below. Take time to discuss each ministry. Talk specifically about what each ministry might look like in your own life, or give examples of where you’ve seen this lived out.

1. Read James 1:19–21 and Proverbs 18:2 and discuss the ministry of **listening**.

“You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God’s righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.” (James 1:19-21)

“A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing personal opinion.” (Proverbs 18:2)

2. Read 1 Peter 4:7–10 and discuss the ministry of **helpfulness**.

“The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.”

3. Read Galatians 6:2 and discuss the ministry of **bearing with**.

“Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

4. Read 1 Peter 4:11 and Psalm 107:1–2 and discuss the ministry of **proclaiming**.

“Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:11)

“Oh give thanks to the Lord for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, those he redeemed from trouble.” (Psalm 107: 1–2)

## Personal Reflection & Challenge

1. What do you miss most about being in community?
2. What are some ways that you can embody God’s beautiful gift of life together this week?
3. Who are some people who need your ministry of listening, helping, bearing, and proclaiming this week?

## Prayer

God, it is your love that knits us together, and we need your help to continue to love others well. Help us to live out your life together in significant ways. I thank you for the examples of faithful women and men who have come before us, and for the generations who have loved well before us. Help us to listen, help, bear, and proclaim to others about your life giving love.