



EXERCISING YOUR MIND IN

Community

April 1, 2007

Focal Passage

Psalm 133:1–3

Focal Teaching

Understanding the importance of Community as a discipline in the Body of Christ and what it means to live in intentional Community.

Preparing to Teach

- Invite class members to briefly discuss why we like to be alone and why we like to be with others.
- Encourage discussion about why it is important we balance both.
- Have the class come up with scenarios where more is accomplished by a group than by individuals working alone.
- Ask class members to share different types of Community they have experienced.
- Probe the class to see if anyone has intentionally established a relationship with someone unlike themselves.

Suggestions for the Lesson

Introducing the Lesson (5–7min.)

- Review Solitude ahead of time in order to remind class members about key themes learned.
- Invite the class members to briefly discuss what they learned from the discipline of Solitude.

Reviewing and Exploring the Biblical Material (30 min.)

- Ask for a volunteer to read aloud each of the following passages and then discuss them as a group. Suggested questions are provided to stimulate discussion.
- *John 17:20–23*
 1. In what way does Jesus use the Trinity to illustrate the importance of Community among believers today?
 2. Did God the Father answer Jesus' prayer for unity among believers?
- *Matthew 26:36–45*
 1. How did Jesus balance Solitude with Community in this scene?
 2. Why was it important for Jesus to be with his disciples in these final moments?
- *Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24–25*
 1. How did the early church demonstrate Community?
 2. In what ways do people avoid Community in the church today?



16106 Middlebrook Dr
Houston, TX 77059
281-488-8517
www.ubc.org



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- *Matthew 25:31–40*
 1. How does Community extend outside the walls of the church?
 2. How are you reaching out to those described in this passage?
- *1 Corinthians 12:12–27*
 1. In what ways does the description of a body illustrate Community?

Concluding the Lesson (5–7min.)

The discipline of Community is more than having friends, common interests, and agreeing on most issues. It is more than small group Bible study and potluck dinners, although these can be good things. Like a family, Community is not always warm and fuzzy. Sometimes Community requires intentionally committing ourselves to others and upholding the relationship no matter what.

It is said that Americans love rugged individualism and reward independence. In many ways, Community requires submission and humility toward others that is at odds with rugged individualism and independence. Jesus had three years of ministry on this earth. While he spent time in Solitude, he also intentionally spent time in Community, going back and forth between the two. He lived and engaged simple men and women—some who were unlovable by the world's standards—who often misunderstood him. In this manner, Jesus gives us a perfect model of intentional Community.

Questions for Discussion (10–15 min.)

1. What can you do this week to build true, intentional Community?
2. How does God use Community to mold believers into Christ-likeness?
3. How does listening facilitate Community? How can you improve on the discipline of listening?
4. How is Community similar to fellowship? How is it different?
5. In what ways did the *BodyLanguage* Journal help you understand Community this week?
6. In what ways do other people help you connect with God?



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Inductive Bible Study Worksheet

Scripture	Questions for Understanding	Observations
<p>Psalm 133:1-3 A song of ascents . . .</p> <p><i>¹ How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!</i></p> <p><i>² It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes.</i></p> <p><i>³ It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.</i></p>		

