

40**days of community**What on earth
are *we* here for?

Belonging Together

We're Chosen to Fellowship Together

Deep inside of us, we all know that the theme of this week's study is true, that "we is more powerful than me". We can accomplish so much more together than we can alone, but to do that means that we have to rely on others; in fact, we have to love them. That's where the "rub" often comes, because as many Christians might say, "I love the world; it's people I can't stand". However, in Christ's teachings there is no such thing as a "Lone Ranger" Christian. We are called to *belong*, not just believe. Although in our pride or individualism we may fight the concept, as far back as the Garden of Eden we have understood that it is not good for us to be alone—we belong together. To carry this out over time requires love, which is a deep commitment to the person's best to whom we are

connected and with whom we serve. There are some characteristics of this kind of love. First, love always protects the other person, especially when that person is coming under attack from others. Literally, Proverbs 11:13 says that a loyal friend "covers over with silence" a revelation that would harm their friend. Confidentiality is crucial to loving relationships, and without it little intimacy can be achieved. Similarly, genuine love always trusts. Some think that trusting people are just gullible, but the truth may be that they are simply more loving, wanting to believe in the other person rather than doubt their motives. Those who trust not only believe in the other, but sometimes they have to believe "for"



**Discovering God's purposes
for our lives works
better together**

the other person. That is how we really bless one another. True love also hopes for each other—it is enthusiastic about the other person's accomplishments. Hope holds on, praying expectantly, believing that something good is going to happen, because God is in charge. Finally, true love always perseveres—it never quits loving, no matter what happens. We belong together, a possibility that only exists with this kind of love.

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- Worship—You were planned for God's pleasure
- Fellowship—You were formed for God's family
- Discipleship—You were created to become like Christ
- Ministry—You were shaped for serving God
- Evangelism—You were made for a mission

Study Questions for Next Week

(To be used as a companion to the "Better Together" devotional guide)

Day 15—Read Romans 12:5b. How do you react to the thought that each of us actually "needs" each other? What are some ways this is true?

Day 16—Read Romans 14:19. What are some signs that someone is "committed" to you? Beyond your physical family, who, or what, are you committed to primarily, and how do you know that?

Belonging Together—Study Questions

Day 17—Read Romans 12:10b. Why is it so important to “honor”, or “respect” each other to be able to belong to each other? Which of the ways listed on pgs 77-78 do you need to work on most with those around you?

Day 18—Read 1 Peter 3:8. When do you feel the most support from those around you? Think of a specific way that you can lend your strength to someone today. How does having a tender heart and humble mind help you with this?

Day 19—Read 1 Corinthians 1:10b. How well do you get along with others? Why is the encouragement to “Go for the love, not the win”, such a powerful aid to genuine peace in your relationships? Who can you apply that to in your life?

Day 20—Read Ephesians 4:2b. How does having understanding for others lead to more patience with them? Take an inventory of things that make you impatient, and see how being understanding can help you in each of these.

Day 21—Read Ephesians 4:25. Why is honesty so necessary to have a true sense of belonging with each other? Do you tend to tell lies of commission, or lies of omission, where you leave out part of the truth? Why?

Scripture to Remember

“Since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others.”

Romans 12:5b NLT

Celebration Fellowship

*Reaching—
Restoring—Raising Up*

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www.celebrationnet.com

Life Group Questions—Reaching Out Together

(Using questions based on today's message, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship that enable us to grow in Christ.)

1. How does it affect your life when you are “on a mission”? What is the greatest “mission from God” you have ever been on?
2. Brainstorm some ways we can pray together about our mission to reach others for Christ through our small group. Why is this so important?
3. Talk about specific things, including the “empty chair”, that can be done to make our love to others more than just words.
4. Discuss the differences between isolation and insulation from the world, and imitation vs infiltration of the world. Why do we tend to do the first of these?
5. Let each member share briefly (2-3 minutes) their 3 part story of life before Christ, how they came to Christ, and their present life in Christ. How could we share that this week?
6. Discuss anything else that impressed you from the message today if you have time.