



Creating Life-Giving and Life-Changing Community

WORKSHOP 1: *Cultivating a Safe but not Soft Community*

MARCH 1, 2021



Why Spiritual Community?

▶ **The Nature of God:**

↳ Community is at the very core of God's nature, as seen in the Trinity.

▶ **We are Created for Community:**

↳ Reflecting God's nature, being created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27)

↳ We are created as relational beings with a deep, innate need for relationship with God and with others (Matt. 22:37-39)

▶ **Transformation Happens in Community:**

↳ "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another." (Prov. 27:17)

↳ For genuine change to happen, we need the support and encouragement of others; we need their loving correction; and we need their help.

↳ God works through others in relationship with His Spirit in our lives to bring about change and transformation.



Biblical Examples of Spiritual Community

▶ **Acts 2:42-47**

↳ Characterized by fellowship (intimacy, sharing, harmony, unity, close relationship), breaking bread together, praying together, and sharing all things in common.

▶ **Acts 4:32-35**

↳ Characterized by being of one heart and soul, sharing with one another, and common needs being met.



Biblical Exhortations for Creating Spiritual Community

▶ **Phil. 2:1-2**

↳ Characterized by being of the same mind and same love; being in full accord; and having one mind.

▶ **Col. 3:12-17**

↳ Characterized by putting on love; living in harmony and peace; being one body.

▶ **Heb. 10:24-25**

↳ Characterized by love and good works, meeting together, and encouraging one another.



Definition of Spiritual Community

- ▶ Spiritual community reflects mutual and shared relationships among God’s people characterized by love—openness, vulnerability, care, concern, self-sacrificial service, correction, and speaking the truth in love.
- ▶ The nature of spiritual community reflects a place where God’s people are known and loved—where we can know and love others. Authentic spiritual community reflects God’s love lived out in tangible ways with other Christ followers.



The Importance of Leaders in Creating Spiritual Community

- ▶ Leadership is like water, it flows downhill, meaning leadership influences the nature of spiritual community.
- ▶ **Looking to Jesus’ Example: 4 Principles**
 - ↳ The Leader’s Love & Prayer
 - ↳ The Leader’s Example
 - ↳ The Leader’s Perspective
 - ↳ The Leader’s Encouragement & Empowerment



Creating a “Safe but not Soft” Community

- ▶ **Jesus and the rich young man – Mark 10:17-22**
 - ↳ Jesus loved him (verse 21)
 - ↳ Jesus challenged him (verse 21)
- ▶ **Characteristics of a Safe but not Soft Community from Jesus’ example:**
 - ↳ To create a “safe” community, the leader should:
 - ↳ Be available
 - ↳ Listen
 - ↳ Seek to understand
 - ↳ Be accepting
 - ↳ To create a community that is “not soft,” the leader should:
 - ↳ Probe deeper
 - ↳ Challenge
 - ↳ Not seek to control



Application

How can you apply one thing you learned over the next two weeks in your community?



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