

## **Sermon: Covered by community**

### **Christianity requires community**

Romans 12:9-21

The Christian life is a community life.

We are made for community.

### **If community is so great, why doesn't everyone do it?**

Community is hard because we are broken.

Community requires sacrificial love.

Community requires humility.

Community requires grace.

Community requires trust.

2 Corinthians 6:11-13

## Bible Study: Covered by community

### Getting to know you

1. Begin by reading Psalm 133. Have you experienced what this psalm is describing? When and how?

### Going deeper

2. Read 2 Corinthians 6:11-13. Paul points out that he has “opened wide” his heart with the Corinthians. He asks them to reciprocate. What does it mean to open our hearts wide?

There is a difference between honesty and openness. You may be completely honest but still very closed about revealing yourself. If we are going to live in community, however, then you have to practice openness. It means being vulnerable, revealing some struggles and imperfections. It's not something you should do with everyone but everyone should have someone (or a small number of someone's) whom they can trust.

3. Is opening our hearts wide difficult? Why or why not?

It is very difficult. We live in a performance based culture. We are taught to always be in control and to always appear successful. When you are open, some will betray you by sharing your thoughts with others. Others may use them against you or judge you for them. It takes tremendous trust in God and great confidence to reveal that you are imperfect.

4. Read Galatians 6:1-5. Here we are taught that we should carry one another's burdens. But we also learn that each one should carry their own load. Is this a contradiction? What does this mean?

If someone can carry their own burdens, they should not ask someone else to carry them for them. Although some may offer and that's okay. We shouldn't be lazy and expect others to do what we can do ourselves. However, when we need help, we are not only allowed but should be encouraged to ask for help. We should be looking for opportunities to help others in ways they cannot help themselves.

5. Read Hebrews 10:24-25. We are supposed to consider how to “spur one another on to love and good deeds.” Consider that right now. What answers do you come up with?

I don't have a lot of suggestions because if I knew of other ways, I would be encouraging it already. I'm looking forward to hearing what others have to say. Leaders: pass on any ideas to the church leadership.

6. What can we do to develop deeper community in our church?

Ditto the last answer.

### Putting it into practice

7. Let's take the steps we came up with in questions 5 and 6 and put them into practice this week. What goal can we set that we can accomplish before next week's meeting?