

DISCIPLESHIP COURSE

An Invitation to Follow

PART 4 | FORMATION | COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY

"Spiritual formation is the process by which Christ is formed in us — for the glory of God, for the abundance of our own lives, and for the sake of others." — Ruth Haley Barton

THE BIG IDEA

Just as Play-Doh can be shaped into anything, you and I are constantly being formed by someone or something. As disciples of Jesus, the question is: are we intentionally allowing ourselves to be shaped and formed by him?

Community is not optional for a follower of Jesus - it is vital. We need one another to grow, to be encouraged, and to keep following Jesus wholeheartedly.

KEY SCRIPTURE

Colossians 2:1-2

"I want them to be encouraged and knit together by the strong ties of love. And I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself."

FROM SIT-TOGETHER TO KNIT-TOGETHER

Paul's vision for the church is not a group that merely occupies seats together - it's a community knit together by love. Here's what that difference looks like:

SIT-TOGETHER CHURCH

- Familiar conversations, but nothing deeper
- Shows up sporadically to gatherings
- Sees church as a requirement to fulfil
- Surface-level acquaintances

KNIT-TOGETHER CHURCH

- Consistent, committed community
- Gives time to Jesus and others throughout the week
- Sees church as a family to belong to
- Shares life, burdens, and faith together

FOUR WAYS WE LIVE OUT COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY

1

We Commit to One Another

Community isn't always convenient - but we choose it. We share not just scripture, but our lives: opening our homes, getting around tables, and showing up even when it's hard.

1 Thessalonians 2:8

"We were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our lives as well."

2

We Support One Another

Burdens are inevitable in life - but they don't have to be carried alone. Church community is designed to share the weight of what we carry.

Galatians 6:2

"Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ."

3

We Inspire One Another Towards Living Like Jesus

Like coals in a fire, we keep each other burning brightly. When we gather, our goal is to think of ways to motivate each other towards love and good works.

Hebrews 10:24-25

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another."

4

We Lead One Another Closer to Jesus

Community isn't just about living like Jesus - it's about drawing each other into a deeper, abiding relationship with him. We build each other up in faith.

Jude 1:20

"Dear friends, you must build each other up in your most holy faith."

A FINAL THOUGHT

"Jesus didn't come to build a new religion to fill buildings. Jesus came to build a new community who would share their faith and life together and become a people of love."

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

1. In what areas of your life are you most aware of being "formed" - by culture, social media, or habits? How does that compare to how you are being formed by Jesus?
2. Would you describe the community you currently have as "sit-together" or "knit-together"? What's one step you could take this week to go deeper?
3. Which of the four expressions of community (commit, support, inspire, lead closer to Jesus) feels most natural to you - and which feels most challenging?
4. Is there a burden you've been carrying alone that you could share with someone in your community this week?