

Living in Christian Community, Part 2

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[0 : 00] Philippians chapter 1 verses 3 through 11.

! It is right for me to feel this way about you all because I hold you in my heart.

For you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Christ Jesus to the glory and praise of God.

May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? I am sure that many of you guys know what I am talking about, those paintings that you see a lot of times at carnivals or festivals.

[1 : 34] And there is a cut out where the head is supposed to go and the painting is of a body. And you know, usually it is a muscle man or a clown or a mermaid or something funny. And then you guys know the drill, you put your head through it and it is something you take pictures and you laugh at because the head does not match the body.

The Bible describes Christ as the head of the church and we as his body. And so I want to ask you guys, you know, imagine as Christ as our head and we as his body, if the world were to look at that match, would they laugh at it or would they be in awe of what they saw?

The beauty of God, Jesus Christ, the head, matching his body, the local church. There's a couple verses I want to read to you this morning or read along with me.

They're on the screen there for you. And the Bible describing this and it says in Ephesians 1, 22, and he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

And then first Corinthians chapter 12, verse 27, now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. This is how the Bible pictures the church.

[3 : 01] It's the body of Christ of which Christ is the head. When as a body of believers we are living in the type of community prescribed by God's word, we will match, we will fit our head, and the world won't laugh but be in awe of what they're witnessing.

Before I talk to you more about how we experience the good life by living in community with one another, I want to point out some distortions that many people have today of what the church is or what it's supposed to be.

And these come from Tom Nelson. And the first distortion is that many people view the church as a spiritual gas station. For some people, church is a place where you come to fill yourself up once a week on the spiritual gas or resources that you need to be able to make it to the next following Sunday.

Right? I'm going to come to church, I'm going to hear a good sermon, and I'm counting on that to keep me going throughout the rest of the week until I come up to church next Sunday and I'm empty again and I need to be filled one more time.

Now I've got to say that there's nothing wrong with coming to church. You should come to church expecting to be filled like that, but there is so much more to the church than that. We gather and we meet more than once a week.

[4 : 23] And not only that, but you also have God's word yourself and you are to be filling yourself with the word of God during the week as well. The church is so much more than a spiritual gas station.

The second distortion that many people have of what the church is, is they view it as like a movie theater. This is a place where I go and I am entertained. This is a place where I come and you're again, your job as a church is to entertain me and I am able to come in anonymously. I don't want to be asked to do anything. I don't want to be asked to provide any kind of service to anybody. I am a customer. Right? And I am here to get what I want and then leave without anybody even knowing or asking my name.

And then the third distortion that people have of what a church is supposed to be is they view it as a big box retail store, kind of like a Walmart, right? Again, with the customer mentality, I will keep going there as long as you provide me the goods that I want.

And when you stop providing me the goods that I want, or if I find another store that can get me what I want for a better price or have more of what I want, then I'm going to leave.

[5 : 36] And so many people view the church in that way. And here's the thing though. You won't find any of those pictures of the church in the Bible. Nowhere does the Bible describe church as being any one of those three things.

And you know why? Because all of them have one thing in common, and it's this. They make church about you.

And this is going to be hard for some of you to swallow, but the truth is that church isn't about you. Church is about Jesus Christ and what he has done for us, bringing us into his body and together as a community.

But these mindsets are pervasive in our culture in many churches today. And I don't know about you, but I'm not real loyal to any one gas station. I don't care where I get my gas.

Or movie theater. I don't really care where the movie's at. Or any retail store. I'm looking for the best deal for me, right? And once you start viewing church in that way, don't you see how that is a terrible misinterpretation of what Christ's body is supposed to be and how it's supposed to function?

[6 : 59] I want us to move away from the self-centered ways of thinking about church that many of us have. And I want us to, this morning again, continue to look at what the Bible tells us the church is supposed to be and what the church is supposed to look like.

And so let's review the past couple of weeks where we've been. We've been talking about living the good life, that abundant life that Jesus talks about in Scripture. What does he mean by that? Well, first we saw that living the good life means living for Christ instead of yourself.

How do you want to experience the good life? Well, Christ becomes your center instead of you. And then we saw last week that living the good life is experienced by living in community with other believers.

J.I. Packer said, Christian fellowship is two-dimensional and it has to be vertical before it's horizontal. We must know the reality of fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ, before we can know the reality of fellowship with each other and our common relationship to God. And so when we do experience this, right, when our relationship with God is right, our relationships with each other are right as well, when we do that we will experience the type of life that God has commanded and ordained for us to live.

[8 : 23] It's an abundant life. It's a good life. It's a Christ-centered life instead of a self-centered life. We've been going through on Sunday evenings Echoes of the Reformation.

And we sang this morning, A Mighty Fortress is Our God. That was a hymn of Martin Luther's. What a great song. Thank God for what God did through those reformers 500 years ago.

And they together defined sin as this. Sin as something being defined as man being turned in on himself. Man being turned in on himself.

Isn't that essentially what sin truly is? Isn't that the DNA of sin? That sin makes us self-centered. Sin inserts you into the middle of your universe.

Sin makes the world and life all about you. The one place that's reserved for God and for God alone. You insert yourself there as a result of sin.

[9 : 26] Sin reduces your field of concern to your wants and your needs and your feelings. And so sin really makes life all about you. Now here's the thing.

We as Christians know that this is true about sin. We know that this is what sin does to us. But many of us are still determined to live self-centeredly thinking that the gospel will not be enough to satisfy us.

And that the grace that is mentioned in God's word is too easy or too good to be true. So we become self-sufficient religious individuals instead of Christ-centered believers seeking instead to attain for ourselves the things that only we can receive from Jesus Christ.

That we've already been given by Jesus Christ. The body of Christ is a true picture of the church. And in order to experience the good life, we must understand that we must be satisfied with what God has given us.

That in order to experience the good life, we must embrace the community that God has given us to live in. A community that is Christ-centered. A community that is also gospel-driven.

[10:52] A community where relationships thrive and where relationships are cultivated by the word of God. A community where it's okay to not be okay.

Where you can come into this place and be honest with what's going on in your life. And know that you will receive the love and support and encouragement from your Christian brothers and sisters that you need.

A place where you can come and bear your burdens. Have your burdens borne by others and where you can bear others' burdens as well. Don't you want to be a part of a community like that? Yes. Amen. Me too, Wes. And I think that we all do. But in order to experience it, we must embrace being part of the community of Jesus Christ.

The community that he has given us to belong to. So what does that mean? Well, last week we saw that it meant being thankful for one another. How do we experience the good life and community with one another?

[11:52] Well, it means that we're thankful for one another. It also means that we pray for one another. It means that we participate in the advancement of the gospel together. Together.

And it means that we experience the type of community that God has given us to experience. Where we become together more like Christ.

And so what else does this mean? Well, we're going to get into that this morning. It also means that we encourage one another. It means that we are supporting one another. It means that we love one another.

And that we are urging each other on towards becoming more like Christ. And when that happens, we will experience the good life that the Lord has given us to live.

So look firstly with me again at verse 3. Or excuse me, verse 6. Living in community means encouraging one another. It means encouraging one another.

[12:51] And I am sure of this, the Apostle Paul writes. That he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

When I was in seminary, during my morning classes I would drive to work in the afternoon. And J. Vernon McGee was always on the station. You guys know J. Vernon McGee and who I'm talking about.

He's a pastor who's passed away a long time ago. But a great man of God. And he's still heard on the radio today. And you can't miss his voice.

It's got that southern, deep southern twang. And he always calls his church family friends. Now friends, listen to me, blah, blah, blah, right? And so you can't mistake him.

And he's been a great resource for pastors even today. And I'll never forget he was telling a story about this verse that I just read to you. Philippians there, chapter 1, verse 6.

[13:47] That's his life verse. And he gave an explanation for why that was. That he, as a young man, as a little boy in fact, his father died. And so at age 14, he had to get a permit in Tennessee in order to work, to provide it for his family.

And so what J. Vernon McGee did is he would wake up at 14 years old. At 5 o'clock in the morning, he would get to work where he would sort the mail and then deliver it at the company that he worked for.

And he wanted to go to school, but he just couldn't find the time, right? He had a family support. And he knew that God was calling him to ministry, but he just couldn't figure out how that was going to happen.

And so God blessed him as a result of being in Christian community. There was a man in his church who had a son who was unfortunately a wild individual.

He wanted to party. He wanted to drink. He didn't care for the things of God. This man, his father, wanted his son to go to college, but he didn't want to do that. So instead, he saw this man in J.

Vernon McGee, a young man who had been called to ministry, who needed his help.

[14:53] And so he stepped in and acted kind of as a father figure for him and enabled him to be able to go to school, to be able to find work so that he could go to college. And so he went to college.

And as he was about to graduate, actually when he did graduate, he had lost his job. The depression had hit. He needed to go to seminary in order to be a pastor, and he had no idea how any of this was going to happen.

And so he tells a story about he was still in his cap and his gown. He went back to his dorm room, and he was sitting on the edge of his bed just dejected, not knowing what to do. Right?

God, you've called me, and I've gotten to this point, but I can't see past the obstacles that are right here in front of me. And so his roommate came in and asked him what was going on, and they had a conversation. And J. Vernon McGee is telling him, all these different things that are making him frustrated and doubtful and lacking in faith.

And he says just at that moment the phone rang, and it was one of the older ladies in his church. She was a widow, and she lived with her sister who was also a widow. And they asked that he would come stop by their house later on that day.

[15:58] And so he did. And he said he didn't really know what was going on at the time at his church. He taught the middle school Sunday school class, and they were rowdy boys. And he said, I always thought these ladies looked at me with disapproval for how rowdy they were, but they asked me to come to their house.

And each of them handed him an envelope. And they said, I want to give you this on behalf of my son's memory. And so he said as soon as it was polite to leave, he left, and he got around that corner, and he tore open that envelope, the first one.

And inside, now remember, this is during the Great Depression, a check for \$250. He opened up the next envelope inside, a check for \$250.

That night, he had a banquet. His Sunday school class was giving him a banquet, a going away.

And there he received a check for \$100 with this verse written in there. And J. Vernon McGee said, I had the money at that point in time to go to seminary.

I had doubted God, but now I had all that I needed. And isn't that a great source of encouragement? You see how we are able to encourage one another? You know, those ladies were just listening to what God was asking them to do, and they, along with J. Vernon McGee's church and that check of just \$100, were able to send one of the greatest preachers in America to seminary.

[17:15] That's what it means to encourage one another. Now, you might not think that what you're doing and encouraging each other will go very far, but I'm telling you that it does.

I had somebody like that similar to, for me, when I was growing up in church. He was a man, he never married, Chris Stringfield. And he was an older guy, and he just gave me encouragement all the time.

I'd get to church, I was a little kid, and I would, you know, be going crazy, running around, and he would slow me down, and he would just encourage me. I remember one time, I'll never forget, he showed me the Milky Way galaxy, a picture of it.

And he pointed at where the planet Earth was, and it was just a little tiny speck in the midst of millions of other little tiny specks. And he was telling me, you know, God created all of this, and God created you.

And, you know, and I just don't forget it, because in that moment, you know, just a little couple minutes with him, he was able to encourage me, and I got to see a little glimpse of just how much God truly loves me.

[18:15] And I'm telling you, the things that you do for one another in a church, they have a lasting impact when we encourage one another like that. And I encourage you to encourage other people in our church.

And that's what Paul is doing here with the Philippians. He is being encouraging of them, saying, I am confident of this. I know you people. I know what you're going through.

I was there. God used me to plant your church, and I am telling you. I know that what God has started in each of you, God will one day bring it to completion.

That you are a work in progress, and that God will bring all of what he has promised and declared to you to fruition. He was encouraging them that the Holy Spirit would continue to do for them that day

and onward what God ultimately would do in that great day when he would come back and see it through completion.

The Lord isn't finished with you yet. But one day he will be. On that day, at the day of Jesus Christ, Paul says.

[19 : 27] When Jesus comes back to take his own out of this world, the Bible says that the Holy Spirit that has sealed us, we have been sealed until that day unto redemption.

Until that day, we can count on the fact that God will one day consummate whatever he has intended for us, for you, to be and to become. You will experience it.

One day, you and I, believers in Jesus Christ, we will be able to look at the face of our Lord and Savior. We will know what colors his eyes are.

We will be able to see the hands that were pierced for our transgressions. We will be able to talk to him face to face. We will be glorified forever.

And God is working in our lives, preparing us for that day. It will happen. Isn't that encouraging? Man, that is a great source of encouragement.

[20 : 30] God will see us through. And I take encouragement from that because I am good at messing things up. I am good often at times of not following Christ like I'm supposed to.

But the encouragement I have from him is that I have his Holy Spirit. And you do too as a believer. And God will see us to that day. That is an amazing source of encouragement.

And so we are to encourage one another in this Christian community. Because you know what? It is hard to live this life in this world. And so when we come here on Sunday.

When we come here throughout the week. We are to encourage one another. Encourage each other on. Reminding each other of the hope that we have. That is secure. That is good in Jesus Christ. The second thing about living in Christian community.

Is what it means is loving one another. In verses 7 and 8. The apostle says it is right for me to feel this way about you all. Because I hold you in my heart. For you are all partakers with me of grace.

[21 : 29] Both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness. How I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. This is critical for the church.

Without love we are just a bunch of noise. Noisy gongs. Clinging cymbals. But love is what keeps us in community. In harmony with one another.

Look at 1 John chapter 3 and verse 14. It says that we know we have passed out of death into life. Because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.

Do we understand what he is saying here? He is saying that loving other Christians is evidence that you have been saved. If you are saved then you love your brothers and sisters in Christ.

And if you don't. Then maybe you are not truly saved. We might get mad at one another. That will happen.

[22 : 30] We will disagree with one another. Sure. And in fact we will annoy one another at times. And we are to be long suffering impatient with each other.

When that is the case. But at the foundational level of all of our relationships in the church. Amongst believers. There is love. I care about you.

I will pray for you. I will encourage you. Maybe we don't always get along. But when it comes down to it. I truly love you.

How do we show that we love one another? Well look at how Paul showed his love for the Philippians. He expressed his thankfulness for them. He expressed that he prays for them all the time.

That he is thankful for their participation in the advancement of the gospel. And he is actually in fact suffering on their behalf. As we have gone over. This man who is writing about joy.

[23 : 31] Is in an unjoyful place. He is in prison. And he is in chains as he is writing this letter. Inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. And he is doing that. He is suffering for Christ's sake.

For their sake. Ultimately his time will come to appear before the Roman officials. Where he will give a defense and proclamation of the gospel. And he is doing that for these churches.

These Philippians. Who were a Roman colony. He considered his difficult circumstances an opportunity. To defend and to confirm the gospel.

And this would help the churches everywhere. So how can Christians learn to practice this kind of love? It seems that many of us.

If we are honest. Get along better with our unsaved neighbors. And co-workers. And it is when we come to church. That we have conflict. In relationship.

[24 : 29] The Bible says that Christian love. Is not something that we have to muster up. But it is something. That as a result of us being saved. Again with the Holy Spirit living inside of us.

It is something that God is able to impart to us. And through us. In verse 8. Again. Paul says. I yearn for you all with the affections of Christ.

Any of you have a King James version of the Bible? What it says there. I love it. There we go. In the King James version. It translates that verse as this. I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. That sounds kind of gross when you think about it. Right? What is he saying? Your bowels. This is the stomach. This is my guts. You know as men and women we talk about I have a gut feeling. Right? What do we mean by that? I have this instinct. That I've got to go with. And as a result of being given a new nature in Jesus Christ. We have new gut feelings.

[25 : 29] Right? It's my instinct. I love you from my guts. Right? And when I think about you even. You know how in your stomach when you. You think about something you love.

Right? You get those butterflies. Those tingly feelings. That's what is being talked about here. So here's the deal. When I think about my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

When I think about my church. When I think about you all. Paul is saying. I get tingly feelings in my guts. It's my instinct. I love you. Do you think. Do you feel.

Do you love each other? Like that? We should. Man I love my church. When I think about the people in my church. It makes me tingle inside.

Is that. I don't know. Maybe that sounds too weird. But that's what the Bible is saying. Is it not? I love you with the bowels of Jesus Christ. I love you with all of my guts. It's my gut feeling. To love you all.

[26 : 23] To love you all. And this was the other thing that Paul is saying. It's not Paul's love being channeled to them through Christ. It's Christ's love being channeled through Paul to them.

Do you understand that? He's not mustering this up. He's saying because of my relationship with God. God through Christ is channeling his love through me to you all. And so that's the way it is for us.

When we're walking with Christ. When Christ is our center. When Christ is our focus. He is channeling his love through us. To the church. And again love is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Is it not? If you are a believer. Then you should be a loving person. The Bible says. I don't have any reason.

On my own. To love you. Or you to love me. You know. Many of us. We're not related. By blood.

[27 : 25] And many of you know each other for a long time. But there was a time where you didn't know each other. And really when the world looks at you all. And thinks. Why do these people love each other? It seems strange to them. Because really if we think about it. If there is no God.

Then we shouldn't love each other. The way that we do in the church. Should we? Friedrich Nietzsche. Many of you may know him. He was a German philosopher.

And he said that God is dead. That was his declaration. And he basically was setting the thought process for the German people.

That ultimately led to Adolf Hitler coming to power. And doing the atrocious things that he did. Because basically it was this. We're all just highly evolved animals. Right? And so I'm going to do what's right and what's best for me.

And you can maintain your survival or your existence. Only if it means the preservation of my survival or my existence. Survival of the fittest. The weak should die.

[28 : 27] And only the strong should live. But the Bible says that we aren't to love each other like that. In fact Timothy Keller. A pastor in New York says. If there is no God. Then Nietzsche is right.

And there is no good reason to tell someone else they should live unselfishly. And should it be any surprise to us. That as we are living in a culture where people are told that they are just animals. That they're beginning to truly act like animals. Behaving like animals. The Bible says something much different. It says that we are to love.

Like Christ has loved us. Well how can you tell that you love other Christians? Well by being concerned for them. Caring about them. The believers at Philippi were concerned about Paul.

And so we'll see later on. They sent somebody to him. Epaphroditus to minister to him. Likewise Paul was concerned when Epaphroditus became ill. And wanted to make sure that he returned to

them right and well.

[29 : 26] There was concern. And we ought to be concerned for one another. 1 John 3.18. Little children let us not love in word or talk. But in deed and truth.

How do we do that? Well forgiving one another. You know we'll say some really harmful things to one another at times. And sometimes we'll say things to each other that we didn't really mean to say.

But somebody took it in an offensive way. And there will be times where we just put our foot in our mouth. And we say something that is out there and we can never get it back.

But we regret having said it. But we didn't really mean it to be harmful. And I've done that many a times. And I'll do it many more times I'm sure. I remember back in Kansas when I was first a pastor. And we were having one of our first communions together as a church there. And the deacons would come from the back of the church to the front. And it was my job to call for them to come forward. And I would ask will the deacons please come forward.

[30 : 31] Well I wasn't thinking. And instead of saying will the deacons come forward. I said will the demons please come forward. And they forgave me right.

I didn't really truly mean it. But sometimes we'll say things. We'll put our foot in our mouth. And we don't really mean what we say. But sometimes we do. Say things that are cruel.

And when that's the case you must ask for forgiveness. And as a brother and sister in Christ. Because of what God has done through Christ. In forgiving your sins. We should forgive one another. Because as 1 Corinthians 13 5 says.

Love keeps no record of wrongs. And so it's a joy to belong into a community like this. Living the good life is experienced. By living in a community with believers who love each other.

And then thirdly. Living in Christian community means urging one another on towards becoming more like Christ. And it is my prayer.

[31 : 30] That your love may abound more and more with knowledge and all discernment. So that you may approve what is excellent. And so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ. Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.

Through the glory and praise of God. And so he is encouraging this church. He is urging this church. Because he loves this church.

To become more like Christ. And as a church that's what we need. We need each other to urge each other onward. To becoming more like Christ.

That we see what God sees in each of us. We see that. You see your brother and sister in Christ. And you are urging them on because you know what God has planned and intended for them.

And you urge them along. When I was thinking about this. Again I remembered college when we were. We had to go to weights during the week for baseball.

[32 : 30] And all the other athletes were in there as well. And we had this weights coach. He was an old. He was a mean nasty guy. But he was a Christian. So he loved us down at the foundational level.

Right? Right? But you wouldn't have known it. By some of the ways that he would treat us. And some of the things that he would say to us. He was tough as nails. He's about this tall. He's a little old guy. And he's about 85 years old.

But he was probably the toughest person in the room. And none of us dared to cross him. His name was actually Coach Cross. And in his weight room. In his weight room. There was a sign.

That said. This isn't Burger King. And that's all it said. You know why? What's Burger King's slogan? Have it your way. This isn't Burger King. Right? You cannot have it your way here.

And here's the thing. When you messed up on something. When you skipped an exercise. He wouldn't just come to you and tell you what you did wrong. He would stop everybody in the entire gym.

[33 : 26] And he would focus on you. And he would tell you about all the things that you did wrong. That you didn't do right. And it was embarrassing. I've been in that place before. Not only if you messed up.

Your partner had to bear the penalty with you. And so there was quite a few times where I had to do 100 push-ups. Right? Through the whole thing. And then this is what Coach Cross would do. He would bring in the young guys.

The freshmen. And he would pair them with the older guys. Because the older guys by that time had been chewed up by him before. And they knew what was expected. And so those older guys were able to help those younger guys do it the right way.

And so we see that in the church as well. Right? We have believers who have been walking with the Lord for a long time. They've experienced a lot in their walk with Christ.

And then we have new believers. And in the same way we call that discipleship. Right? When a more experienced believer comes alongside of a more inexperienced believer. And helps them.

[34 : 25] Urging them on towards becoming like Christ. That has to happen in the church. In order for the church to become the type of community that God has designed it to be.

We need others in the church to help us stay close to Christ. When we feel drained. When we feel deflated. When we feel defeated. We need our church family. That's what the Bible says.

Hebrews chapter 10 verses 23 through 25. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering. For he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir one another to love and good works.

Not neglecting our meetings together as is the habit of some. But encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near. Urging others to be more loving.

Is what we ought to be doing. We are called to love the unlovely. We are called by God to love even our enemies. And we are to love them as Paul says with knowledge and discernment.

[35 : 31] This means that we love each other in a true way. An authentic way. It's not forced. It's not made up. But it's real. It also means that we are urging others on to purity and sincerity.

In becoming more like Christ. Pure there in the Greek. It's used to define viewing something in sunlight. So that you can see it clearly.

Right? And I think of my. When I wear glasses. I hate having smudges or dirt on them. I can't stand having anything kind of blurry in my vision. And so in the same way. We urge one another on towards Christ likeness.

When somebody mess up. When somebody is not seeing the Bible correctly. We provide that cleaning through the cleansing of God's word. And then we are also sincere in how we love one another.

That is from the Latin sinceris. Which literally means without wax. How are we to love one another? Well without wax. Let me explain. Back in the Roman and the Greek times.

[36 : 32] Especially in the Roman times. You would have sculptors. And they would make these beautiful sculptures out of stone. But they would make mistakes. And sometimes they would go back.

And they would go to different places. Where these sculptures had been torn apart. And they would piece them back together. And when they made a mistake. They would use wax. To stick the parts. Or to cover up the cracks. And so when somebody would come and buy that sculpture. It looked to be in one piece. They would take it home. They would send it outside. The sun would melt the wax. And the thing would fall apart.

So what you had was in this culture. You had Roman sculptures. Who would hang a sign over their sculpture. That said sinceris. Sincere. Without wax. And so you and I as Christians.

As believers. As a part of this church community. Our love. Our urging. Our encouragement of one another. Must be sincere. Without wax. Without wax.

[37 : 28] I genuinely. Authentically. Truly. Care. About. You. I want to know what's going on in your life. I want to know how God can help me. To help you.

And I will be praying for you. And I. Want you to know. That I truly. And deeply. Genuinely. Care. About. You. And it feels great to belong to a community.

Like that. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said. Christianity means community. Through Christ. And in Christ. Christianity means community.

Through Christ. And in Christ. And so he's basically saying. Is two things. One. Only those who profess. Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Experience Christian community.

And secondly. Only those who are empowered by Jesus. Can live. In Christian community. Do you know Jesus Christ? Christ. And are you walking with him.

[38 : 26] In such a way. That you can be the blessing. To your Christian community. That God has called you. To be. Thank you.