



FULLY ALIVE

The Goal of the Gospel



AUGUST 25-27, 2018

Relationship

This week we're learning about relationship and community. We're learning how our spiritual birth and salvation awaken us into a new sort of community. And we're learning how God designed us for that sort of community and spiritual family.



WATCH THE VIDEO

NorthlandChurch.net/Studies

Afterward have someone read the discussion questions in the "Hear God's Story" section and start the conversation.

Share Your Story

Begin by praying together. This should be a brief, simple prayer in which you invite God to give you insight as you study. You can pray for specific requests at the end of your time together or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

Then begin your time together by discussing the following questions.

- What's a relationship that means a lot to you?
- What defines a really great friendship?
- When have you felt like a significant part of a community?

Hear God's Story, and Create a New Story

READ ACTS 2:41-47 (NIV) & JOHN 3:1-3 (NIV)

- The Acts passage tells the story of the beginning of the first Christian church, just after the resurrection of Jesus and Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the church. How did the people of that first church spend their time?
- What were some of the life-giving practices the first church engaged in that fostered a sense of community and togetherness?
- In the John passage, how did Nicodemus know Jesus was from God? In the Acts passage, how did the broader local community view the first church?
- Have you experienced the sort of community or togetherness described in this passage in your own life? How did that experience affect you?
- When have you seen real Christian community attract the "favor" of others? What made that community attractive to the world around it?
- Jesus told Nicodemus that no one could see the Kingdom of God unless that person was born again. In Acts 2:41, 3,000 people were born again and baptized, then became part of this church. How do you think their new perspective on the Kingdom of God affected the patterns of life they adopted in the first church?
- How could you build a community like this? With whom could you and your group build that community?
- What are some of the perspectives on the Kingdom of God you could adopt in your own life? Within your community or small group?

Give each person an opportunity to share prayer requests.

Find Your Story in God's Story

If you feel God is nudging you to go deeper, take some time between now and our next discussion to dig into His Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session's theme on your own, jotting your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. Want to go deeper? Select a few verses, and try paraphrasing them, writing them in your own words. If you'd like, share them with the group the next time you meet.

Community first means a collection of people bound together because of a shared purpose, or, put another way, people experiencing unity because of what they had in common. There can be many bases for community – geography, affinity and so on. But generally speaking, the limitation for every community is the temporary nature of the bases that brought people together in the first place. Something as simple as moving to a new neighborhood breaks community. But in Jesus, we can find an enduring foundation for community.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:18-27 (NLT) & HEBREWS 10:23-25 (NLT)

- What are some of the different roles needed for a healthy community to flourish?
- How is the life of that community – or the life of a church – affected when the body is missing some key parts?
- In what ways do you see yourself as vital to your own community? How can you remind others of *their* importance to your community?
- What are some of the habits of a healthy community that we should practice, according to this passage?
- What are some practical ways you can motivate others in your community to love God and love others?
- What are some ways you can practically encourage people in your community?

Engaging people to be fully alive in Jesus.

What are some areas in your life where you're hoping to be more fully alive? Who are some people already in your life who can help you experience more of that life in Jesus? How can you spark and share life in the people around you?