

Gospel
DNA

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to community group! We believe that people come to faith and grow in their faith when they get to spend time reflecting on God's Word, and also spending time with other Christians. That's what we're hoping for tonight. As we get started, here are some things happening in the broader life of the church:

- **IHN (Interfaith Hospitality Network) | November 17th-24th**

Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) is a family homeless shelter located in East Walnut Hills that partners with the faith community to provide shelter and food for families in need. Each week different congregations in the city host 4 families for the week, starting Sunday at 5p to the following Sunday at 6a. In most cases this is done at IHN's own facility. New City will be hosting at Grace Place, which is located in College Hill: 6037 Cary Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45224. New City will begin hosting families starting Sunday evening, November 17th through Sunday morning, November 24th. This is a great opportunity for New City to serve those who are experiencing homelessness in our city. There are several ways to serve: Greeting/Dinner Volunteers, Activity Volunteers, Overnight Hosts, Food Provision. Check out the event on the Church Center App for more information on how you can help.

- **New City Guys Barbekubb | Sunday, November 17th 5p**

DATE CHANGE: we'll gather on Sunday the 17th rather than Friday the 15th. Gentlemen, come join us at the church building for an evening of food, fire, and pointless yard games like [Kubb](#), [KanJam](#), and [Cornhole](#). If you've got a favorite yard game, like the old dangerous classic Jarts, feel free to bring it along. Bring your own beverages and a side to share. Dan Sudlow will be smoking a copious amount of pork for us so RSVP on the Church Center App.

Why Can't We Go It Alone

(Ephesians 2.11-22)

Open up with a prayer for your time together: giving thanks for the community God has given us, asking for encouragement amongst one another, and for God to be honored, etc.

OPENER: What is your favorite Halloween candy?

STUDY/DISCUSSION

>> **READ** >> Ephesians 2.11-22

1. Charles Spurgeon said "The social element is the genius of Christianity." Agree or disagree?
2. Is there a time in your life where you felt like you have had a good experience of community? What was it like?
3. Read aloud the paragraph from "Is Facebook Making Us Lonely?" (see leaders notes). Does any of this resonate with you? Do you think its true that we are experiencing an epidemic of loneliness in our culture? Why or why not?
4. In verses 19-22, what images does Paul give for the church? What does this tell us about the importance of the church in God's plan?
5. What are the challenges to being a part of a church community?
6. What are the benefits of being a part of a church community?
7. v.11-16 - How does Paul describe the effects of Jesus' work on our relationship to one another?
8. How can this passage prepare us to live together in community?
9. How is this passage good news for our neighborhood?

PRAY

Take some time and pray together. Today, focus on prayers of thanksgiving for your community group. You can pray for the growth of the group, but make sure and give thanks for the group's existence, for its various members, and for the chance to have conversations like this together.

LEADER'S NOTES

1 - The Importance of the Church

a.) You need community generally

We are living in an isolation that would have been unimaginable to our ancestors, and yet we have never been more accessible. Over the past three decades, technology has delivered to us a world in which we need not be out of contact for a fraction of a moment... Yet within this world of instant and absolute communication, unbounded by limits of time or space, we suffer from unprecedented alienation. We have never been more detached from one another, or lonelier. In a world consumed by ever more novel modes of socializing, we have less and less actual society. We live in an accelerating contradiction: the more connected we become, the lonelier we are. We were promised a global village; instead we inhabit the drab cul-de-sacs and endless freeways of a vast suburb of information. ("Is Facebook Making Us Lonely?" The Atlantic, May 2012)

"It is not good that the man should be alone" (Genesis 2.18)

"Communion is strength; solitude is weakness. Alone, the free old beech [tree] yields to the blast [of the wind] and lies prone on the meadow. In the forest, supporting each other, the trees laugh at the [storm]. The sheep of Jesus flock together. The social element is the genius of Christianity." (Charles Spurgeon)

b.) You need the church specifically

c.) But how involved do I have to be?

Paul stacks metaphors with increasing intensity (v.19-22):

- fellow citizens in God's kingdom
- members of God's household
- building blocks in God's temple

2 - The Purpose of the Church

a.) so you'll know God better (v.18)

The more alone you are in your Christianity, the less intimate you will be with God.

b.) so you'll be built up

"when each part is working properly, [it] makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love." (Ephesians 4.16)

c.) to show the gospel to the world (v.13-14,17)

3 - How God Makes the Church

a.) Key word: hostility (v.11-14)

b.) On the Cross, God killed the hostility (v.16; 2 Corinthians 5.21)

c.) He is your peace (v.14)