

THE BASIS FOR AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY
GENESIS 1:26-28; JOHN 17:20-23

Introduction – Discovering the importance of community

We believe that God has designed us to share our spiritual journey as a community of believers. We are better together. We were never intended to make it on our own. All of us are people in process, broken and needing healing in various ways. But each of us has been made in God's image, and with a unique shape. We believe that spiritual transformation happens best within the context of genuine sharing and face-to-face relationships in a small group. We desire to nurture relationships based on grace as well as truth in our leadership teams, our small groups and our homes.

I. Authentic Community in the Creation

A. The mystery of God (Genesis 1:1,26)
Elohim

B. The wonder of marriage (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25)

II. Authentic Community in the Nation of Israel (Deuteronomy 6:6-12)

yachid (the number one) vs. *echad* (oneness in unity)

III. Authentic Community among the Disciples

A. The call to community (Mark 3:13-15)

B. The command for community (John 13:34; 15:12-17)

C. The model for community (John 17:1-11, 20-26)
• *Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 15:22-28*

DAILY BIBLE READINGS
JANUARY 5-11

Follow-throughs

In quite a number of places in the Gospel of John, Jesus mentions various aspects of the relationships between members of the Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. What do you discover about the relationships between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the following passages? In light of the call to pattern our authentic community after the oneness of the Trinity, what applications can you make to the cultivation of our own relationships?

Monday **John 5:16-40; 6:35-51**

Tuesday **John 8:12-59; 10:22-30**

Wednesday **John 14:1-30**

Thursday **John 15:1-27**

Friday **John 16:1-33; 20:21**

Warm-ups

Saturday **Mark 3:7-19**

What activities was Jesus engaging in? How was his influence growing? Why did Jesus appoint the twelve? How does the ministry of Jesus expand through those that he enlists to follow him?

Sunday **Luke 6:12-16**

This paragraph describes the same incident we read about yesterday. How did Jesus prepare for selecting the twelve? What are some of the things he may have prayed about? As you think about your pattern of relationships, ministry and group involvement in 2009, what do you need to bring to the Lord in prayer?