

# SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 28.07.24

**PREACHER: PS CAM HALL**

“PRACTICES OF JESUS: COMMUNITY”

## BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

*BEING, THINKING & DOING*

**Conviction of a Disciple:** The Church Community is Beautiful and Important  
As we grow and mature as followers of Christ, we begin to understand that our life in Jesus is a life TOGETHER with others.

### OVERVIEW

True community begins with the Trinity, a divine community of mutual self-giving love and care. By finding our identity and security in this community of God, we are empowered to build genuine relationships marked by vulnerability, support, and mutual care.

### ACTION

**Step 1:** Reflect: Reflect on your understanding of the Trinity as a community of mutual submission and care for the other. How can this understanding change your vision for your own need for community?

**Step 2:** Commit: What can you do this week to actively begin to strengthen your relationship with God and others?

**Step 3:** Act: Identify one practical step you can take this week to open your heart and life to those around you with vulnerability and honesty. How will you actively participate in carrying each other's burdens and giving of yourself for the good of others?

# THOUGHT

**SCRIPTURE:** Galatians 6:2

At the base of all things, the very foundation of reality lies a community. And this community is a community of love, care, and mutual submission and preference for the other. And it is a community so full of love and care that in an act of extravagant generosity and hospitality, spills out from itself to create everything that has ever been created.

As Christians, we call this community The Trinity - Father, Son, and Spirit. Three and yet one, unique and yet united. Because of this reality, as humans, community - both the desire for it and the essential need for it - is stamped into our very being. This fact is one of many ways that humanity is made in God's image. Both psychologically and biologically, we are created to exist in community; community with our Creator AND community with each other. God exists within a community and pours out for others, so we are created to do the same.

We probably all acknowledge that we crave this sense of belonging and community. So why is it that so many still struggle to find it? One might simply say, "I'll head out and be around lots of people and then that longing for community will be filled". But the truth is, we can stand shoulder to shoulder on a crowded train or shopping centre and still feel extraordinarily alone.

So, how do we find true community?

Like all things, finding community with others begins by finding our identity in our place inside the community of God. Things begin to radically change for us when we realise that we are being invited into the life-giving dance of the Trinity. Fully accepting that God welcomes us, forgives our sins, and walks with us on even life's most difficult paths lets us know we are loved and held by, not only the all-powerful Creator of planets and stars but also the humble and intimate Creator of my innermost being.

From this place of security, we become free to open our hearts and lives up to those around us with vulnerability and honesty. Knowing that we are cared for by God, we can begin sharing our lives - carrying each other's burdens, praying for and giving of ourselves for the good of one another. As Christians, we aren't simply called the "left ear lobe" or "pinky toe of Christ"! Paul says that together we are the BODY of Christ. An ear lobe is fine but doesn't do much good on its own.

If we're honest, we all have reasons why it would be easier to live closed-off and private faith-ed in our walk with Christ. The reality is though, it's not what we are called to or created for. We genuinely need each other. Especially in this life of faith in Christ. There is no doubt that at times our deepest wounds come from sharing our lives with others, but it's also where we find our deepest transformation and healing.

## DISCUSSION

1. How does the concept of God as a community of love and care shape our understanding of human relationships and community within the church?
2. Discuss the challenges you face in finding genuine community. What are some ways we, as a group, can support each other in overcoming these challenges and building a deeper sense of belonging?
3. Share personal experiences where opening up to others in vulnerability and honesty has led to transformation and healing. How can these experiences inspire us to continue fostering a supportive and loving community?

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We are so grateful that you invite us into your community of love. May we find our identity so securely in you, that we begin to open our hearts and lives to others so that through us you would build a genuine community that reflects your Kingdom here on Earth.

In Jesus' name,  
Amen.