

Ice Breaker

What was your favorite game growing up?

Announcements

- **January 19th - NG101:** Join us for NorthGate 101, a brief orientation about our Christian Community! Our leaders are excited to meet you! Join us for lunch and an opportunity to learn more about our NorthGate family. Following the second service. Space is limited, so register today! Childcare and lunch provided!
- **February 9-12th - Holy Spirit Week:** Come worship with us and learn more about the Holy Spirit. Services will be at 7:00 pm at Northgate. Childcare available, but please contact Jason Stiffler if childcare is needed.

This week Community Groups are starting up! As such, the message was focused on the importance of building and being part of an intimate and faithful community of believers. Roy started by asking us to remember a time we had felt like we were growing the most, he pointed out that most likely during that time you were surrounded by intentional, Jesus loving community. A big part of our development as believers is involvement in a faithful community that loves Jesus well.

Roy went on to explain that in the first two hundred years of the church there were no buildings or staff, but instead people met in homes, shared meals, and discussed the teachings together. Originally communion was a whole meal, not just a wafer and juice on Sunday morning. This isn't to say that the way that we do church is wrong, but that we need to make sure to include that element of community that doesn't come as naturally.

Roy shared Acts 2:42-47, focusing on what was happening in the early church. There was giving, prayer, worship, meals all shared and done in a group. There was also explosive growth of the church despite no buildings or services to attract people, just authentic community. Roy pointed out that America is a more individualistic culture from our music to our personal lives. We tend to keep people at an arm's length. Relationships take time, initiative and work carry a lot of risk so it's easier to keep everyone at a safe distance. But without authentic and loving community we can never truly grow.

Laurie shared her testimony of how God used community groups and grief share to help her and her husband as they grieved the loss of their Son and how it has helped them to continue moving forward in their walk and build new friendships and authentic relationship. Roy shared how it was a small group in Chile that helped him to overcome his issues with sexual addiction as a student.

Authentic, faithful, Christian community is essential for growth and life as a Christian. While we don't meet for service in homes any more, Community Groups serve as a place people can live life together. Share their struggles and be honest. Roy said there are few things more transformational than showing your ugly side and still being loved for it.

Discussion Points

- Take a few moments to think of a time when you grew the most in your faith. What kind of community surrounded you during this time?
- What are some of the key things that community did that helped you to grow the most or what are some things that you feel a community needs to have?
- Take some time as a group to come up with a guide for what this group needs to be in order to be a healthy, safe, loving community of believers.
- If this didn't come up already vulnerability is a key part of building a safe and healthy community. Have everyone share something they are struggling with in their daily life and then one thing they are struggling with in their walk with God.
- As each person shares, have everyone in the group pray for that person.

Vision - A Christ Centered Community of all ages, mentoring students to change the world
Mission- To know Christ and make Him known