

Taking it Home:

- What were the three ideals Pastor Matthew presented as ideals for groups at Bethel?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- Based on the three ideals presented by Pastor Matthew, who could you be praying for this week to specifically experience this kind of community?
- Research shows that people connected in community read their Bible regularly, pray for their church regularly, pray for fellow Christians, and regularly confess sin to God and ask for forgiveness. In what ways does being in community encourage you in your spiritual disciplines?
- Which of the three ideals you heard about on Sunday stand out to you most as an area where you can grow? What's your next step?
- Dr. Larry Crabb reports: "In my 10 years of private practice, I became persuaded that the community of God's people was meant to be the place where the deepest healing takes place. I came to the conclusion that real healing has less to do with technical intervention and more to do with profound relational engagement." In what ways are you making yourself available to this kind of relational engagement this year?

Recommended Resources

- *Transformational Groups* by Ed Stetzer
- *Inside Out* by Larry Crabb.

Dr. Matthew St. John

Bethel Church

September 7, 2014

The Life Changing Power of Community

Colossians 4:7-14

The Life Changing Power of Community

Notes:

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew's sermon points, visit pastormatthew.net and click on the "Write This Down" tab.

For more information about Growth Groups, Growth Group homework, and a podcast of sermons with homework, visit www.bethelcf.com.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of September 7, 2014

Colossians 4:7-14

Quick Review: As the Apostle Paul concludes his letter to the church in Colossae, he takes extra time to appreciate the small group of believers who have ministered to him through his trials. Paul wrote the letter from a Roman jail. First century prisoners had access to friends and family who would come to care for them and support them through their imprisonment. The friends who came to Paul's aid are listed by name and the qualities of their friendship are celebrated in this short letter. We see in Colossians 1 that the purpose of the letter is to make Jesus preeminent. Paul could have written many things to this young church whom we have never met so it is important to notice and appreciate the high value he puts on the person of Jesus and the role of community in living out their faith. Paul models for the young church a lifestyle and set of beliefs that will enrich their understanding of Jesus, His Church, and His people.

My Story:

- Just for fun: If you met a believer who lives 1,000 miles away and wanted to share with them some of your current life experiences, what elements of your life would you be most excited to share? Of your friends, who would stand out in your sharing?
- When was the last time you were a part of a group that struggled to all get along?
- Who do you notice around you that is part of a growing and healthy group (ABF, Growth Group, Men's or Women's study, etc)?

Growing Deeper:

- As you have time, read the entire letter to the Colossians. At four chapters, this is one of Paul's shorter letters.
- What does Colossians 1 say about the person of Jesus?
- What does Colossians 1 say about your identity as Jesus' follower?
- List each of the names Paul writes about in 4:7-14 and then list the character quality Paul celebrates for each person. What stands out to you about the diversity of this group?
- How does the person of Jesus and the believers' identity in Christ give way to the fruitful community we read about in chapter 4?