



Home Group Discussion Guide

October 24-30, 2021 – The Soul of Community – an encouraging community

Devotion: When I was in Jr. High, I watched my school friends get in a line to have a chance to play four square. It was our recess time and it looked like anyone could play so I just fell in line behind them. I had no idea how to play the game but assumed I could figure it out by watching. When someone was “out”, a new person stepped into the empty square. The person with the ball said “Robert’s rules” and bounced the ball to someone else. The four people would continue to bounce the ball into different squares until someone was called “out” and the process repeated. As my turn got closer, I was catching on to some of the rules of the game. Finally, it was my turn, I stepped into the square, heard the server call Robert’s rules and the ball was in motion. Within 2 seconds everyone stopped and called me “out”. The only problem is that I had no idea what I did wrong. Luckily, one of the older students took a moment to explain what “Robert’s rules” were so I could learn and get back in line to try again!

Joining a Christian community can sometimes feel like my Jr. High four square experience because you’re learning the “rules” as you go and you watch others intently in hopes of figuring it all out. The soul of Christian community is encouragement. Those around us won’t always get it right, but we have to be so grateful they are willing to get in the game and grow in their faith. Our job is to encourage them all the way.

Be an encourager. The world has enough critics already.

Scripture – Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

- According to this passage, followers of Christ are children of the light. In what ways do you think God is asking you to bring your light into the world? (Think about your family, your work, your neighborhood, etc.)
- Look again at verse 8. By any chance, does that sound familiar? Compare it to Ephesians 6:14-17. What are the similarities and differences? Why do you think this would be good advice for a community of believers?
- Verse 11 says to “build” each other up. The Greek word means to restore and rebuild. How can your home group be the vehicle for restoration within the people in your group and also in the bigger community? How does that mirror what Jesus does for us?

How is it with your soul? (*Go around and share as you look back to the “good and the bad” of this week and then look forward to what you can do or where you want to see God move this week.*)

- Where have you seen God this week?
- Where have you struggled this week?
- How can you be open to God/the Holy Spirit this week?

Prayers