



## the gift exchange

### EXCHANGE LONELINESS FOR COMMUNITY

December 14 & 15, 2024

“The loneliest moment in life is when you’ve just experienced what you thought would bring you ultimate fulfillment, and it has let you down.”

- Ravi Zacharias

#### 3 Key Ideas About Community:

##### 1. Community starts with \_\_\_\_\_.

**Genesis 1:26a, 27** (NIV)

Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image...” So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

##### Do I have community with God?

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##### Am I bringing my strength to my community or just my weakness?

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##### 2. Community overcomes differences because of a higher

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Ephesians 2:14-17** (NIV)

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

**What dividing walls still exist in my life?**

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**Who do I have an opportunity to see that might be invisible to others?**

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**3. Community lasts \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Revelation 7:9 (ESV)**

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands...

**Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV)**

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

**How much time and energy am I spending on things that don't last?**

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**How to Connect to Community:**

**1** \_\_\_\_\_ my insecurity.

**Ephesians 1:13-14 (NIV)**

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

**Hebrews 6:19-20a (NIV)**

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf.

**Romans 8:15-16 (NIV)**

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

**What insecurity is keeping me from connecting with others?**

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**2** \_\_\_\_\_ first.

**Mark 1:16-18 (NLT)**

One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!" And they left their nets at once and followed him.

**Who can I take initiative with this Christmas?**

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**3** \_\_\_\_\_ like God does.

**Colossians 3:13 (NIV)**

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

**Who do I need to forgive?**

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**4** \_\_\_\_\_ my best to my church family.

**Genesis 2:18 (NIV)**

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

**1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (NLT)**

The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.

**What is my place on the team here at Grace?**

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What dividing walls still exist in my life?

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Who do I have an opportunity to see that might be invisible to others?

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### 3. Community lasts forever.

#### **Revelation 7:9** (ESV)

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## How to Connect to Community:

1

### Release my insecurity.

#### **Ephesians 1:13-14** (NIV)

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

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**2**

**Go first.**

**Mark 1:16-18 (NLT)**

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**3**

**Forgive like God does.**

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**Who do I need to forgive?**

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**4**

**Offer my best to my church family.**

**Genesis 2:18 (NIV)**

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

**1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (NLT)**

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