

0 (0s):

Speak to us and change us Jesus' name. Amen. All right.

1 (5s):

So we are talking about community today

0 (9s):

Years

1 (10s):

Ago, there was a man by the name of Kristoffer glass dad. He was a Norwegian man and he was at the age of 26 and he decided he wanted an adventure. So he got a bunch of gear together. And then he chartered a plane so that he could fly into

0 (25s):

Remote nowhere of

1 (28s):

The Northwest territory of Canada. And he charted this plane to take him about an hours flight from the nearest village of just a few hundred to a lake that didn't even have a name

0 (39s):

Northern Canada. And they left him there alone. He

1 (43s):

Had packed some gear. He had brought some food, but there he was by himself. So when he got there, he chopped down, some trees built a log cabin, tried to hunt for his own food and all of that stuff. And he was doing a good job of surviving. But what he found very quickly

0 (59s):

Was that it was extremely hard. Not,

1 (1m 2s):

Not just to live off the land. I mean, that's, that's normal heart. He'd done that before, but it was hard because he was so isolated from everyone. He says that in an interview afterwards that he said, you know, the, the friends and family, I knew I liked them beforehand, but I didn't realize I needed them until I hadn't heard their voice. He even had a satellite phone and he could call some people, but it wasn't enough. He said, he went a period of 14 days without hearing another person's voice at all, tried to talk to himself. And he sounded crazy. He tried to sing, he couldn't carry a tune. And he just felt so isolated that he had to give up after six months because he missed

0 (1m 35s):

People. See God created us for community. For real.

1 (1m 41s):

In fact, if everything that God created in the entire universe, he said, good, good, good, good, good. The only, the only thing he said was not good. You know what? It was just not good for man to be alone. It's the only thing that God said, wasn't good

0 (1m 54s):

At the beginning. So we are made for relationships. We are made for community that there's

1 (1m 60s):

A reason why isolation breeds some, some difficulties. There was a study out of BYU just a few years ago that found that if people are living lonely lives for a long time, it has the same effect on your body. Physically as smoking 15 cigarettes a day,

0 (2m 16s):

Loneliness is

1 (2m 17s):

Tough on us emotionally and

0 (2m 19s):

Physically. We need relationships. And yeah, I think

1 (2m 24s):

This is so important because we live in such difficult times that, that right now, and this was even pre pandemic guys right now for the first time in history, teenagers report more loneliness than people over 50. And we're going to talk about some digital reasons for that in a couple of weeks. But people struggle here in Denver, pre pandemic, 2019, we were ranked as the third loneliest city

0 (2m 48s):

In America. We need relationships.

1 (2m 52s):

We long for relationships and loneliness kills us. Lonely just kills us. There's a reason why even people in solitary confinement are required by law to be out for two hours a day. Because if they're not, they go crazy. Literally we need relationships. We need connection. We need people around us. Yes. We need to choose

0 (3m 12s):

Community. Even when it's hard. When this

1 (3m 15s):

Series engage, we're learning how to normalize a better life. None of us want to go back. Only 9% of people want to go back to life pre pandemic. So we're looking for something better. So we're talking about some basic practices that we can put in our lives. Some building blocks that if we build on those things, it will help us normalize a better life. And today, one of those practices is community and we need to learn to choose community. And in particular, we're going to learn about a specific type of community today. That's so important to us and it is the community of other followers of Jesus. So what we're going to learn today, this, what we're going to learn is that unity

0 (3m 47s):

In community is a foretaste of eternity. Okay? Unity

1 (3m 53s):

And community is a foretaste of eternity. When we have other people who believe in God with

0 (3m 58s):

Us to encourage you, to

1 (4m 0s):

Challenge us, to help us grow together, that that community is a foretaste of eternity of heaven. And we can experience that and have that now to help us normalize a better life. So if you have a Bible, go ahead and open with me to Psalm 133 Psalm one thirty three. If you have a smartphone, you can get there too. If you're using the YouVersion Bible app, you can go ahead and find the rise church Denver event. And on there, you can take some notes on this passage. It's a very short Psalm written by David. It's. One of the songs he wrote to talk about why we need community and what happens in

0 (4m 33s):

Community. So I'm gonna start

1 (4m 35s):

There in verse one of Psalm 133. And here's kind of like the subscript of the song. It says a song of a sense, a grouping of song here in this section of the songs. And it says of David written by date.

0 (4m 50s):

He said, how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity,

1 (4m 59s):

Good and pleasant. It is when God's people live together in unity. So the first thing I want you to notice here is that it's written by David, this song. So David of course, was the king of Israel. He slayed a giant Slingshot, remember that? And then he became king of all of Israel. He was also a prolific songwriter dudes. This guy was the man, right? Kill people as a warrior. He wrote songs, man. We all wish we could be like him. Right? Rockstar, warrior. That's, that's pretty cool title. Right? So here's David. And he writes one of these songs and he's talking about how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity, this community that we can have together. And we're not told when he wrote this or what the situation was, but there was one fascinating situation that happened in his life.

1 (5m 42s):

So it was early on. It was after he slayed the giant actually, after he became a military hero, working for Saul, Saul began to get jealous of him and hated him. Now, David became best friend was Saul's son, Jonathan. They became best friends. They loved each other. It was one of the best friendships you can see in the entire Bible. These guys were just encouraging each other. They loved each other. It was awesome. This friendship, but because Saul hated David because that's what jealousy does. It turns into hatred for the other person. Then he tried to kill David threw Spears at him. There's these scenes like a couple different times. David tried to Saul, tried to kill David with the sphere. So finally, Jonathan was like, dude, my dad wants to kill you. You need to run away. You need to run for your life.

1 (6m 22s):

So David has to take off by himself, on foot. So he runs away. And during this time, things are really bad for David because he's by himself, you see him. And he literally does some bad stuff. Cause that's what we do when we get by ourselves. Don't we, we do stupid things on our own. And he goes, and he lies to a priest in order to basically steal some food. You didn't know that about David, right? Okay. He did some bad stuff. And then he got kind of like captured by one of the enemy Kings and David had to like, pretend to be insane for this guy to let him go. He's frothing at the mouth. That's literally what he did in order to pretend to be saying. So he's doing all sorts of crazy things because he's desperate. And finally in first Samuel 22 verse one, it says the Dave or David had to run and he hid in a cave all by himself.

1 (7m 5s):

That's what happened. Things have been bad. He's buying himself, things get worse. And then he went and hid in a cave. I think we do the same thing when we're, when things are not going well in our life, we kind of push back from other people and then we push them away. We do this. And then we wonder like, why isn't that person? Why haven't they reached out to me? They might, must not care about me. Oh, what a terrible person? What a bad friend. I thought I had friends and we push ourselves even farther and farther away from the people that would have cared for us. And then we kind of hide by ourselves, isolated in the cave. Anybody ever done that? It's so easy to do that in our life today because you can, you can never leave your

home. Some of you are online and you, you haven't been outside of the house in days.

1 (7m 47s):

Okay. You can do that. Right. You, you can drive into your garage, never talked to any of your neighbors, closed the garage door, sit at your laptop, order your food. Right. They'll bring it to your door door. And you don't even have to talk to the guy. Who's the delivery guy anymore. Right? No touch contact. Right? Okay. Not getting COVID and you're getting more isolated, right? So you could live your whole life. Watch your shows,

0 (8m 10s):

Go to work,

1 (8m 12s):

Play video games on Twitch or whatever you're doing. Never see another human person not having any real meaningfully, meaningful communication. You're in your cave. So that's where David was isolated, pushed people away. Basically he's hiding by himself. But one amazing thing happens when David is in the cave there in first Samuel 22, because his brothers find out where he is and they find him and they come towards him. And then a whole bunch of other guys come as well. We pick this up in verse two of first Samuel 22. It says that every man who was desperate in debt or discontented rallied around David, and he became their leader.

0 (8m 48s):

I love this. These guys

1 (8m 50s):

Are like coming around and look at that trio of words. Describe these men, right? Desperate in debt and discontented.

0 (8m 57s):

Okay. Not the people you want to find on the dating app, right? Desperate in debt and discontented. But these are the people who realize just

1 (9m 4s):

Like David David's, they're isolated, he's desperate in debt and discontented. We got our come around

0 (9m 9s):

Him. And this is, I

1 (9m 12s):

Wonder if David's relying back to this. Cause he's like, wow, good and pleasant. It is when God's people come together in unity. He's like when I was at my lowest point and he remembers

0 (9m 22s):

When these guys came around me for me. And here's the thing, David was in a bad state. Right. But so were all these dudes too,

1 (9m 31s):

If we are honest enough for one minute, with other people around us, we'd be able to see, see that they're struggling with the same things that we're struggling with.

0 (9m 41s):

They feel isolated, alone, even relationship. So do I,

1 (9m 46s):

If we drop our guard just enough to admit that we're struggling, other people are like me

0 (9m 50s):

Too. Me too. And if we say I need help,

1 (9m 54s):

That's what we struggled to do. We struggled to ask for help. Don't we? But what if we just do that? Other people be like, yeah, I get it. Cause I feel the same way. And that's why we need community. One of our core values here is a vibrant community. And by that we mean that when we are real with each other, we grow together. When we are real with each other, we grow together. So we encourage that here in our church to be real, we have to be real. We have to be vulnerable because everybody else is dealing with the same crud

0 (10m 20s):

Or different crud. Right. They're in debt discontented too. But, but David

1 (10m 26s):

Needed to go into that cave. And when he did that, all these people came around him and they were dealing with the same stuff, but they could go through it together. And they did. And a lot of those guys became David's mighty men, as you

0 (10m 36s):

Read about later in the scriptures. So

1 (10m 40s):

Even as he's writing, he's writing this from a place of experience. He said, I know what it's like to be alone and isolated and neat. And I know what it's like to have people come around me to encourage me and love me and lift me up. So when he, he says, how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity, he says from personal experience. And I hope that we too can experience what this type of community

0 (11m 6s):

Is. Like. It's

1 (11m 8s):

Interesting that this isn't just any type of person. Okay. These, these desperate people. Okay. You're like, oh, can I just find any desperate, crazy indebt person on the street? Right. Okay. But, but David says in particular, it's good and pleasant. When God's people live together in unity, right? God's people, he's, he, he zeroes that out because there's something about sharing a faith in God that puts other people around me who can encourage me and strengthen me. We share something in common. It's it's for God's people. And I'm seeing that because some of you guys have friends and your friends are not right. They're not in here. They're not building you up. They're leading you into more sin and temptation.

1 (11m 49s):

You go out with them and you've realized, oh my gosh, I'm doing things that I shouldn't be doing. See our community that we're around can shape

0 (11m 54s):

Us. Paul says in first Corinthians 15, that bad

1 (11m 60s):

Company corrupts, good character.

0 (12m 2s):

You ever been there, you don't have to raise your hand. Okay? The people that you're with drive down

1 (12m 8s):

Your care, you start doing stuff that even like an hour beforehand, you're like, I'd never do that. And then all of a sudden you find yourself, oh my gosh, why did I just do that? Bad company corrupts, good character in the ISV. It's translated as wicked friends lead to evil ends. I've heard it said that you, you show me your friends. I'll show you your future. Okay? The people that you're around shape you, and it can be for bad or like Proverbs 13, 20 says walk with the wise

0 (12m 37s):

And become wise.

1 (12m 39s):

If you surrounded yourself with people who are wise, who are encouraging, who share your faith and are going to pull you out of your mess instead of pushing you in or jumping in with

0 (12m 50s):

Those are the people that will shape us for the better. And that's why David here is saying that's when God's people unity

1 (13m 1s):

In our faith that we need in community. But he goes on to say, how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together. It says in verse one, live together. I think that's so interesting. That word live together means to dwell, to hang out, was even the word for people that when they lived in a house or dwelled in a tent, okay, this is life. This is doing life, life on life together. And there's something about that, that it isn't just like, I see you every once in a while, but it's doing life together. That's why we build our community groups here. The way we do. We're talking a lot about them today because we're launching them here in a couple of weeks. Okay? Community groups. What we do for community groups here is that you hear a message on a Sunday. Then you show up at a community group throughout the week.

1 (13m 42s):

And I think there's even some Sunday afternoons all the way, you know, throughout the week. And you discuss what you heard on Sunday, but you do it. Yeah. In an apartment, a home. A lot of them are, you know, some of them are online. Only some of them are hybrid. Some of them are only in people's homes, but you see into other people's homes. You talk about life because what happens when you start doing this weekend and week out is you have to be real

0 (14m 5s):

Because at some

1 (14m 6s):

Point you're going to show up and you're going to be upset and angry and you're going to snippy. And someone's going to say, what's going on? You're like, oh, I just found out my mom has cancer. My boss just ripped me anyone. I think I'm gonna lose my job. We share these real things that are happening in our lives. And people around you can encourage you pray for you. Or when you're doing something stupid can be like, actually, you know the scriptures, tell us we're not supposed to do that. Right? But you have people that are in your life with you. They're seeing what you're doing, how you're acting

0 (14m 35s):

It's life on life. And that's when the blessings of community are found in those groups. It's interesting. There

was a, if you've

1 (14m 46s):

Ever read Charles Duhigg's book, the power of habit, he has a whole chapter devoted to studying groups, particularly at Rick Warren's church, Saddleback church out in California. Rick Warren is of course like the best-selling nonfiction writer of all time and purpose-driven life. Other than the Bible, like very famous guy, Rick Warren, his church, and Charles Duhigg went and studied because they're seeing all these people whose lives are being transformed in this church. So even though I don't know, Charles Duhigg is a Christian or not. He's just like, I've got to study this cause I'm talking about habits. And what he isolated is what makes that church works so well, is that there's a sermon that gets preached. And there's a whole crowd of people that hear the message. And you see other people who believe like you do.

1 (15m 26s):

You're like, wow, look how many people there are that follow Jesus. And then you go to a small group during the week and you talk about the Bible, but it's real people who know your real life. And in the book, Charles Duhigg says, it's like a one-two punch. If you want to change your life for the better you need that one, two punch

0 (15m 45s):

Sunday morning

1 (15m 46s):

And small group, because you can come in here on Sundays guys, let's be honest. You come in, you leave, you don't talk to anybody. Or even if you talk, you say, Hey, I life's good. See you later. That's why we're really emphasizing the connect for right now because it's so easy not to have any real life with

0 (16m 1s):

People. When you come to church, we need those communities. So if you're online and

1 (16m 6s):

Isolated for a while now, get in a group. We have online only groups. If you're here in person, we got online and in-person and hybrid groups. So we encourage you to get in

0 (16m 14s):

One of those groups so that you

1 (16m 17s):

Can live life on life and have that powerful transformation happened with the one, two punch that will normalize that better life F

0 (16m 24s):

For you, courage you to choose community. And I said, okay. I said, our big idea today is that unity and community is a foretaste

1 (16m 34s):

Of eternity. So, so the next ingredient, as we see here in the end of verse, one is unity, right? Live together in unity because there has to be a commitment to community that overcomes our differences. You have to commit to a unity to being together or else we'll just fray

0 (16m 55s):

And separate apart.

1 (16m 58s):

Unity is one of the most important things here. And I'm saying that because sometimes, and for a lot of you, the last place you think of in the world is church. When it comes to the word unity,

0 (17m 9s):

Right? You've seen divisiveness

1 (17m 12s):

And anger and meanness in church. Some of you like myself have the worst hurts of your life

0 (17m 18s):

From other Christians, right?

1 (17m 22s):

It's true. And yet we are commanded to seek unity. It's when we find that unity together, when we push over our differences, say, I'm going to love you anyways. That's when we can actually find that foretaste of Aternity. We can taste heaven together.

0 (17m 37s):

So I want to encourage you

1 (17m 38s):

Guys to do that, to, to strive for unity. I think Hebrews 13, one encapsulates the type of love that we have to have for each other, because it says in that verse in Hebrews 13, one to keep on loving one another as

0 (17m 52s):

Brothers and sisters,

1 (17m 56s):

Brothers with sisterly. Love. I say this because now I have three kids. I get to see a lot of interaction between brothers and sisters. Right? We have McKinley our four and a half year old. And then our twins are almost two and

0 (18m 8s):

A girl. And it turns out that siblings fight with each other. Did you guys know that some of your, like,

1 (18m 15s):

I didn't know that I am an only child. I didn't know. It turns out they do because, and especially with twins, like we have to give them like two of the exact same toy. Right. And we only have one swing and only one person can get in the swing at a time. Right. So the kid that's in the swing is totally happy. The other one's throwing a fit and angry. Okay. One has the toy, the other one takes the toy. They bite each other. It turns out they bite too. They bite each other. They hit each other there's conflict. Right. And, and with, with kids, I can't be like, well, I guess they don't like each other too bad.

0 (18m 44s):

Yeah.

1 (18m 44s):

Right. The next 18 years are gonna be miserable. Right. Okay. We have to resolve conflict between them. We have to teach them. Even now. They're not even two years old. I called

0 (18m 54s):

To say, I'm sorry to

1 (18m 58s):

Have the other person to say, I forgive you. We're working on that already.

0 (19m 2s):

Right. To take turns to

1 (19m 5s):

Admit when they weren't to take some time out when they're too angry and then come back together

0 (19m 10s):

Again so that they can resolve things. Because man, it would be a miserable 18 years. Right?

1 (19m 16s):

You can't give somebody the silent treatment for 14

0 (19m 18s):

Years. I mean, maybe you can, it sounds miserable.

1 (19m 22s):

But siblings have to learn to get along.

0 (19m 25s):

Even though they have differences, even

1 (19m 26s):

Though sometimes they don't like each other, but they love each other because they're siblings. So we, as followers of Jesus are commanded to love each other like that, like a brother and sister, that even if we have differences, even if we disagree, even if we hurt each other, we seek and we grant forgiveness. We seek reconciliation. We were commanded by Paul in Romans. That far be it to you, be at peace with everyone. If you can at all, get peace with another person, reconcile with them. If it's up to you at all, do it. You need to be the peacemakers. We need to love each other. Even when it's hard. And I'm saying, because

0 (20m 1s):

A church needs to be United and we have a lot of differences here. Here's a little bonus point. Unity is not uniformity. The secret

1 (20m 12s):

Here, unity is not uniformity. If you go to a church and everyone looks the same as you, they talk the same. They think the same, probably not in church.

0 (20m 22s):

Church is filled with people from,

1 (20m 24s):

Especially here. We have churches, different

0 (20m 26s):

Races, nationalities, ethnicities, people speak different languages. They

1 (20m 30s):

Have different political persuasions. They vote differently. They think differently. They act differently. They differently. And, and that's what church is

0 (20m 39s):

Because our church here,

1 (20m 40s):

It's a foretaste of eternity and it tells us, it tells us in revelation chapter seven and nine, that they're the lamb is people from every tribe, tongue people and

0 (20m 50s):

Nation centered around Jesus, the lamb. So that means if

1 (20m 54s):

Heaven is like that church should be like that too. And that means there are people here that think completely differently

0 (21m 1s):

Than you, that vote completely different than you. That

1 (21m 4s):

Think masks are ridiculous or they think you're ridiculous for not wearing a mask.

0 (21m 10s):

Right? We have differences

1 (21m 12s):

And social media right now is just dividing our nation and dividing our nation and dividing churches, sadly. But we as a church have to strive for unity

0 (21m 21s):

In the midst of diversity because we're centered around Jesus Christ. He's what brings us together. And we should be the most diverse place in the world. How does it make sense? It doesn't,

1 (21m 32s):

But it only makes sense because we worship Jesus and we strive for unity together. And when we do that, it is a foretaste

0 (21m 40s):

Of Aternity. It's a foretaste of eternity. So, so David goes on to describe

1 (21m 47s):

What this foretaste of attorney, what this blessing is like. And he uses two images to help us visualize and to kind of feel what it is like to have this unity and community. And I love these two images there. They're a little bizarre towards us. So, so let me explain them. In verse two, David says it is like precious oil poured on the

0 (22m 5s):

Head, unity and community. What it's like precious

1 (22m 8s):

Oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on errands, beard down on the color of his robe.

0 (22m 16s):

What the heck is that? Okay. We're like, okay. So

1 (22m 21s):

Oil was used in those days to anoint someone who it had a whole bunch of different uses, just like it does today, but it says a precious oil. This is an expensive

0 (22m 29s):

Oil, very costly. It's interesting.

1 (22m 32s):

The word precious is the same word that's used when it's talking about how good and pleasant it is when God's people do altogether together in verse one. So this is a very good thing, a special thing. And it's this special oil that probably would have cost a lot of money. That's getting poured on Aaron. So who's Aaron will. Aaron was the very first high priest.

0 (22m 50s):

He was the brother of Moses. And because he

1 (22m 52s):

Was chosen by God to be basically the spokesperson between God and mankind, he was anointed

0 (22m 58s):

By Moses. And in order

1 (23m 1s):

To do that, to symbolize God's special provision on this God's special, holy spirit coming down on Aaron, they poured oil on his head

0 (23m 9s):

As a symbol of anointing. But more

1 (23m 13s):

Than that, we see that this oil, isn't just a tiny little bit of oil on

0 (23m 15s):

His head, right? It's so much

1 (23m 18s):

Oil that it's coming down his hair onto his beard and onto his collar of his robe. I don't know exactly what this is like, but we tried to recreate this when, during my time in Nebraska, we tried to create this with a guy named mark in my church who was one of the leaders in my church. I thought, Hey mark, you got a great beard. Let's try this oil thing on you. So I want to show you this little video of what it looks like to pour this much oil on someone's head.

0 (23m 46s):

I don't know if we did it right. And it's

1 (23m 49s):

Probably not the nicest oil. It's the cheapest oil at Sam's, but we poured this oil on and that's when it's enough oil to go on your beard and on your car. That's a lot, right? That seems a little messy. Doesn't

0 (24m 0s):

It? Maybe that's the point. It's

1 (24m 3s):

Messy. It's extravagant to use that much of an expensive oil on a person.

0 (24m 8s):

And yet that's what David tells us

1 (24m 11s):

That unity and communities like it's, it's a little bit messy. If you guys ever felt the messiness of community, you know, sometimes to have oil on the color. I don't think that would be like very pleasant of a feeling.

Right. But, but it's all over the place, but yet it's something special. It's like this poured out blessing. You're like, this is great, but you can, you can feel it. And I wonder if that's kind of how community

0 (24m 32s):

Is sometimes it's awesome, but also messy. Right?

1 (24m 37s):

It's awesome. And messy there, there's the messiness of hearing about life and you're like, oh my gosh, I can't believe you just did that. Right. We hear someone's sin. And we're like, oh my gosh, it's messy.

0 (24m 47s):

But guess what? That's what community is. It's hearing about their mess. Then hearing about your mess. And we love each other. Anyways, we, we sometimes hurt each other. It's messy yet we forgive each other, which makes it beautiful. That's what we do. It's

1 (25m 2s):

A special, powerful thing. And, and there's even something about the feeling of this. David describes it. He wants you to feel that on your neck, wants to feel it on your head. There's a tangible feeling

0 (25m 15s):

Of this unity and community. And I know that that's how community feels like. I remember a few years

1 (25m 20s):

Ago when I was dealing with miscarriages, Christopher Titsworth here in the back. He was in our community group. Christopher said, Matt, we're going shooting. When I was, I was having a rough day. So he picked me up at my house and we went down to the shooting range and it helped so much to be with a friend, just shooting stuff.

0 (25m 36s):

Thank you, Christopher. It was a little messy, you know, gunpowder

1 (25m 40s):

Residue on your hands, whatever it's messy, but it's community. And it felt so good. Or I remember last year when I was

0 (25m 47s):

Going through some stuff, Casey lamb

1 (25m 49s):

In our community group just showed up at our house. That's kind of how messy it is, right? It's like, don't you call first? No, no, no. You show up at people's house in community, right. Showed up at our house to give Melissa and I flowers and to hug us in the midst of some tough stuff. That's what community does. It's messy, but it's beautiful

0 (26m 6s):

Because

1 (26m 7s):

David is telling us don't you want that? It's a foretaste of him. And he goes on now with the second image. So he said, it's like oil is this massive amount of oil being poured on, on Aaron's beard. But it's also like verse three. It is as if the Dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion for there. The Lord bestows, his blessing even life

0 (26m 28s):

Forever more so what's going on there? Well, Herman was the tallest mountain in Israel, about 9,200 feet. Okay. That's not much for us Coloradans, but

1 (26m 40s):

From C-level at the Mediterranean sea to 9,200 feet, that's a lot. And it's even more considering the Mount Zion where Jerusalem and the temple were built was only at 2,500 feet above

0 (26m 50s):

Sea level. And there

1 (26m 52s):

On Mount Herman, it was known as a very luscious green mountain because every morning would be a ton of do see the Mediterranean ocean or the Mediterranean sea. The wind would pick up and it would go right to the top of Mount Herman and leave do there. And it would be wet all year round in the winter, there was a ton of snow there,

0 (27m 8s):

Even in the middle east, not so Mount Zion, Mount Zion was arid. It's the desert,

1 (27m 16s):

But it's where God's people lived. It's the city of David Jerusalem. And so David's like, just imagine unity and community is like, as if all that water, all that do all of that moisture, all that precipitation, all the snow got transplanted

0 (27m 30s):

Here among us. It's going to be wet a

1 (27m 33s):

Little messy again. Right. But it's everywhere around us. That's what unity and community is supposed to feel like. God's blessing just all

0 (27m 42s):

Around you as you experienced it. And I want you to experience that community as well, because it is a foretaste of eternity. Now, as I say that, I know that there are some people who are like Matt Christian community has not been a foretaste of fraternity for me. It's been like, it tastes like burnt hell sometimes, right? It's just not feel good. I've been hurt. I've been stabbed in the back.

1 (28m 10s):

I've gone to a church and I'm like, oh my God, I cannot stand those people. Right. Some of you been to a community group. It wasn't a good fit. What I'm encouraging everyone to do is to try again. Okay. Just try

0 (28m 23s):

Again, try again with community, try again,

1 (28m 26s):

To, to experience this because when we do find it, it's hard. Sometimes it's messy. It is a little glimpse of heaven here on earth of foretaste of the divine.

0 (28m 37s):

We can see people from every tribe, tongue people and nation around us. And we can sit in their living rooms together, rich and poor middle-class, whatever

1 (28m 46s):

Our differences. We can sit together, encourage each other care for each other, hear each other stories and love

0 (28m 51s):

Each other. That's what I want.

1 (28m 54s):

And what's amazing is that when we do it, it does change our lives. I shared some studies in every single of my messages so far in this series so far. And it's the same thing with community that if you choose community, you're much less likely to struggle with an addiction, much less likely to have despair,

hopelessness, or depression or suicide. You're also much more likely

0 (29m 15s):

To be happy. Okay. There

1 (29m 17s):

Was one article, not a Christian article, but it was written. And it said the secret to sustained happiness is found in religious community. It's the secret guys. I just blew the lid off of it. Okay.

0 (29m 30s):

Sustained happiness. It's found

1 (29m 32s):

In community like this. We need it. We're made for community.

0 (29m 36s):

So I wanna encourage you to choose community.

1 (29m 43s):

You know, it, it says that, you know, David writes this as king David and he talks about being on Mount Zion where God's people were in the temple now. And he's like, oh, it's just so amazing that we can get together. What's really fascinating is that one of David's descendants was Jesus and Jesus came and he loved God's people there. In fact, that there's one scene where he's looking over Jerusalem, looking over Mount Zion in the temple. And he says, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, oh, I wish I could be like a mother hen and GRA gather up my chicks

0 (30m 12s):

In my arms and my weeks. So Jesus said, but you know what happened in Jerusalem to him, those people he loved

2 (30m 20s):

And served and came to save, rejected him. They mistreated him. They betrayed him. They put him

1 (30m 30s):

Up on a trial there in Jerusalem, a fake trial where they convicted him of a crime that he did not commit. But then this is the saddest part of all.

2 (30m 39s):

They kicked him out of the city. They made

1 (30m 42s):

Jesus carry across and he was two weeks. Somebody else had to help him carry this cross out of the city, out of Jerusalem, off of Mount Zion and out

2 (30m 50s):

To the hill of the skull Golgotha,

1 (30m 53s):

Because he had to be executed out of the city. It was like being kicked out of the family of God. See, Jesus was cut off when he died on the cross. So even on the cross, he said, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? He was cut off even from his father in heaven,

2 (31m 9s):

But he was cut off from community, from relationship so that we can be brought back in to be the people of God.

1 (31m 18s):

When Jesus died on the cross. It was not only to forgive us our sin and give us eternal life,

2 (31m 22s):

But also to draw us back into community with our father in heaven and with brothers

1 (31m 27s):

And sisters in Jesus Christ around the world, he wants us to have community.

2 (31m 33s):

So Jesus died for this week. I got to

1 (31m 41s):

Get together with a group of pastors from all over the country. I've been in this cohort. Now this is my third group time meeting with this group of guys. And I remember on Tuesday, I'm the only one here in Denver. Everybody else has to come from far away, but I get to be here, which is kind of cool. Cause it's set here. But this group of guys, nine younger pastors and then three older pastors that are kind of our mentors and the very first discussion. One of them was like, how's everybody feeling? Just go around and share. And, and I shared when it was my turn, I'm like, it's, it's kind of rough right now. Okay. The pandemic is, is difficult. It's exhausting trying to make decisions about masks and meet together. And you know, we're still not seeing people in person like we did before.

1 (32m 24s):

I know a lot of you are online. We love you. Thank you for joining us online. But it's hard. Especially as a pastor, I can't even see the people I love. I say it like one of the hardest things for me is people that I've poured my life into that ghost me,

2 (32m 34s):

Has anybody had somebody ghost them?

1 (32m 36s):

Don't respond to calls. I'm like, what the heck is wrong with you? At least tell me I don't like

2 (32m 39s):

You, Matt. I'd prefer that to been ghosted. Okay.

1 (32m 41s):

And I just shared, like, it's been kind of rough and to make it even more rough, the things that were going to filling me up, like aren't working as well as the same because now I got these three young kids that are up all the time. Even when we go on a vacation, it turns out a vacation with kids it's just called

2 (32m 54s):

A trip, found out. But these

1 (32m 56s):

Things that like, he's filling me up. Like I just feel drained. I shared that at the very beginning of this meeting on Tuesday.

2 (33m 1s):

But then I spent, you know, we

1 (33m 3s):

Spent Tuesday night together and Wednesday and Thursday and we hung out and we went for some reason, there's something good about just hitting a target gun, you know, whatever. We, we did it. And we talked and they encouraged me and challenged me. And for some reason, by the end of the week, I feel rejuvenated. I feel awesome. It wasn't like one specific word. It wasn't like an aha moment. It was just being

2 (33m 22s):

Around people who were my community, brothers

1 (33m 25s):

And Jesus Christ who were pastors around the globe and know exactly around the country that know exactly what it's like to be a lead pastor.

2 (33m 31s):

And to have that community it's rejuvenate, it lifts us up.

1 (33m 36s):

And I'm saying that because some of you guys need that community right now.

2 (33m 40s):

So choose community, make this part of your life, build

1 (33m 44s):

Your life around the community that you can have

2 (33m 47s):

In church. So we're

1 (33m 48s):

Gonna encourage everybody to make that step today. Join

2 (33m 51s):

A group, join a group. You

1 (33m 54s):

Can fill out the form online here. There's a little code. You can go in the back. We got two iPads. Sawyer will be your concierge to help you find the best group for you. We meet for 12 weeks straight here in the fall. You can try one. If you don't like it, try another. It's okay. You tried one. You've had a bad experience in the past. Go back and try a different one. And then if you can't find one that fits with your schedule, so here will help

2 (34m 15s):

You start a new one. Okay? Because we need

1 (34m 20s):

That community around us. We need encouragement. So that's the step I want to encourage you guys to take today. And another, the way to do it is to go upstairs to our star class, Dave, we would at our very first one, after the first service go up stairs, you can bypass the backroom scope stairs and what w we'll talk about the same stuff up there,

2 (34m 38s):

But I encourage you to choose community

1 (34m 40s):

Step into that. Lean into that. If you want to normalize a better life, you can't do it

2 (34m 44s):

On your own. Isolation will kill you. Loneliness, destroy you, but

1 (34m 49s):

Unity and community is a foretaste

2 (34m 52s):

Of eternity. Let's pray, Lord God. I know here, there, there are people that are listening to my voice that are struggling with isolation right now. Did they feel lonely? The people that they thought they could turn to are gone or that they

1 (35m 11s):

Haven't talked to in so long that they don't even know how to start up again, Lord God, I pray that you would encourage them to choose community. That you'd speak to their heart right now. And with your holy spirit,

2 (35m 22s):

Draw them into that as messy,

1 (35m 24s):

As difficult, as challenging as it is that we would choose it was community. And we would choose unity in that community again and again and again. Then we might have a little bit of a taste, a glimpse of what heaven is going to be like now with everybody's heads, bowed and eyes closed. If you're here today and you haven't put your faith in Jesus Christ, Jesus, isn't your Lord and savior.

2 (35m 46s):

If you want true community, you've got to make Jesus, your Lord and savior. And he's inviting you today in the unity with him, forgiveness of your sins and unity

1 (35m 56s):

With your brothers and sisters in Christ, all around

2 (35m 58s):

You. So with heads, bowed,

1 (36m 0s):

Eyes closed, I'm going to say a simple prayer. I want everybody to repeat it after me, even if you're already a follower of Jesus, but for some of you, you need to pray it for the first time and mean it to declare that Jesus is your Lord and savior and acceptance gift

2 (36m 11s):

Of eternal life. Please repeat after me, dear God, I'm a sinner. I need a savior. Save me. Forgive me in faith. I declare Jesus is Lord. Fill me with your spirit. Help me to follow you and love others. And then now with eyes still closed, keep your eyes closed for just a second. You said that

1 (36m 44s):

Perfect. The first time I meant it. If today is the first day that you've made Jesus, your Lord and savior, would you please

2 (36m 48s):

Slip your hand in the air at that end of the year?

1 (36m 50s):

We'd love to just encourage you as a community. If you're online, go to [rice, denver.com/follow](https://rice.denver.com/follow) fill out that quick form. We would love to encourage you and welcome you to the family of God,

2 (36m 59s):

Lord God. We

1 (36m 60s):

Are so grateful that you have come here today. I pray that even this morning, we would get a foretaste of paternity that we would feel that oil running down our head on to our next, onto the color of our ropes, the Dew of Mount Herman, that we would feel that all around us as we went worship you, Lord grateful that you have given us grace, the grace, we need to be forgiven and the grace we need to be with others who need it forgiveness as well. We worship you and your amazing grace today.

2 (37m 29s):

Amen. Would you please stand together as we worship.