



## Closer Than You Think 2 – Connection is Closer Than You Think Spiritual Formation Guide

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take a next spiritual step, contact us at [info@wschurch.org](mailto:info@wschurch.org).

### Scripture:

"Here are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (also called Peter), then Andrew (Peter's brother), James (son of Zebedee), John (James's brother), Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew (the tax collector), James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, Simon (the zealot), Judas Iscariot (who later betrayed him)."

Matthew 10:24

"Dear children, I will be with you only a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you can't come where I am going. So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

John 13:33-35

### Reflection Questions:

- What is one of the best communities you've ever been part of? What made it special?
- What stood out to you from Sunday's service? How did you sense God at work in you through the songs, the message, and being together with others as part of the church? (The message main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- Read Matthew 10:24. Take a moment to brainstorm some observations about Jesus' example of community from this description and from what else you know about his life. What do you notice about his example?
- Michael shared, "It is impossible to be selfless in isolation." He quoted Tim Keller, who said, "You cannot know God apart from community." How do you react to these statements?
- Read John 13:33-35. If you're able, read it from several different translations. What stands out to you?
- How does Jesus' command in John 13 challenge you today?
- Michael also shared that we often mistake connectivity for community. Have you experienced this? How?
- In the sermon, he offered two obstacles to community:
  - Fear of better options – being afraid of commitment
  - Idealism and expectations

Which of those is the biggest obstacle for you in experiencing community right now?

- How do you need to step deeper into community today? Get practical! Write some next steps down and share them with someone.

Looking for some ways to grow and be stretched spiritually? Check out our highlighted resources at [www.wschurch.org/resources](http://www.wschurch.org/resources). These resources can be purchased using the links or are available for a small donation at the Next Steps area on Sunday mornings.

### Message Main Points and Scripture:

- **Jesus modeled community.**
- Matthew 10:24 – “Here are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (also called Peter), then Andrew (Peter’s brother), James (son of Zebedee), John (James’s brother), Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew (the tax collector), James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, Simon (the zealot), Judas Iscariot (who later betrayed him).”
- **We were never designed to follow Jesus alone.**
- **“You cannot know God apart from community.” - Tim Keller**
- John 13:33-35 – “Dear children, I will be with you only a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you can’t come where I am going. So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”
- **Community is essential to a full life.**
- “My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.” John 9:10 NLT
- “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 9:10 NIV
- **We mistake connectivity for community.**
- **2 Obstacles to Community**
  - **1 – Fear of Better Options**
    - **“No right, no wrong. No rules for me. I’m free!” Queen Elsa of Arendelle**
    - “All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature.” Ephesians 2:3
    - **“Your strongest desires are not your deepest desires.” - Gary Brashear**
  - **2 – Idealism**
    - **Idealism is the enemy of community.**
    - **“He who loves his dream of a community more than the Christian community itself becomes a destroyer of the latter, even though his personal intentions may be ever so honest and earnest and sacrificial.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer**
    - **“The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer**