

# PARTICIPATE IN GOD-HONORING COMMUNITY

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## Introduction

*What are some benefits of connecting with others? What positive experiences do you have working with a team to accomplish something great? What unique gifts do you bring to a group setting?*

When African lions are hunting to kill, the primary goal is to separate an animal from its herd. Together, the herd can be formidable; isolated, a single animal falls prey. Satan is described as a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). As an enemy of God, he comes to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). One way he does this is to keep you from connecting with others, being a team and working together. *Why?* Because he knows God's mission is accomplished when each one is connected and moving in the right direction.



In this training module you will be introduced to the concept of “better together,” warned against the temptation to isolate and challenged to contribute your uniqueness to the body of Christ.

## Focus Competency:

**Participate in God-honoring community**

## Assignments

- Read Bible passage and answer the Bible Study Questions
- Complete a free spiritual gifts assessment. Go to the link below, print it and complete. [http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcF\\_MYCS\\_030526\\_Spiritual\\_Gifts\\_Survey.pdf](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcF_MYCS_030526_Spiritual_Gifts_Survey.pdf)
- Interview a friend, co-worker or neighbor. Ask them what qualities they think make up a good team. Identify which of their observations apply to the local church or, more specifically, the leadership team with whom you serve.
- Make a list of three ways leaders at Calvary could be better connected. What one thing could you do to help that happen?
- Meet with your Coach to discuss what you learned from your inventory and this training.

## Read Ephesians 4:1-6

*"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

## Bible Study Questions

- Underline the qualities Paul identifies will positively affect our unity with one another. Circle each "one" mentioned in this passage.
- Examine the list of qualities you just underlined. If everyone on the leadership team was displaying these qualities how would the local church be affected? What if leaders were displaying opposite qualities to the ones mentioned? What effect would that have?
- Which of these qualities comes more easily for you? Which of these qualities is an area needing more attention?

## Better Together

The twelve disciples. Peter and John. Paul and Silas. Paul and Timothy. Aquila and Priscilla. These and countless others have realized that life and ministry are better together.

Togetherness, or unity, can be difficult if we choose selfishness and conceit. But when we choose to humbly serve one another, moving forward together is a joy (Philippians 2:3-4)!

- Together, we are stronger (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)
- Together, we complement one another's strengths (1 Corinthians 12:12-13)
- Together, we better endure suffering (Acts 16:23-32)
- Together, we glorify God (Matthew 5:16-17)

An old African proverb says, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." Alone, the global mission of the church is impossible to fulfill (Matthew 28:19-20). But together, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we can fulfill God's mission for us.

## Dangers of Isolation

Disconnection can quickly lead to isolation. When leaders become disconnected and/or isolated they are prime candidates for spiritual attack and failure. Pastor and leadership consultant Eric Geiger says that when leaders are disconnected they remove themselves from being cared for by others, being confronted by others and being taught by others<sup>1</sup>. And this is a recipe for disaster!

If not cared for, a leader can seek out the “comfort” of unhealthy substitutes when difficult seasons come. If not confronted by others, sin can fester in the darkness and, like a cancer, wreak havoc on the body. If not taught by others, arrogance and pride can inflate to life-threatening proportions.

So how do we prevent the dangers of isolation from becoming ours? We connect. We admit when we need help or encouragement. We admit our weaknesses, missteps and vulnerabilities. We move toward others when it’s inconvenient and uncomfortable. We allow ourselves to be corrected and then turn back to holiness. We posture our hearts to learn from and alongside others.

When we connect, resisting the temptation to be alone, we stand against the evil one’s ploy, free to continue the mission.

## One Body; Different Parts

Connected, we are one body. Jesus is the head. We are His arms, feet, mouth, nose, gallbladder, etc. The body functions to its full potential when each part is healthy and fulfilling its God-designed purpose. Every part of the body is essential. No part, or person, is more or less important than another. Each one is needed. Paul describes this truth in 1 Corinthians 12:14-18.

*“For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,’ it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body,’ it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.”*

Since, as one body, we are all connected, if any part of the body is missing, malnourished or diseased the whole body is limited. As part of the body, you are responsible to pursue health because your condition impacts the whole body. When you are not connecting with the body,

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<sup>1</sup> Geiger, Eric. 6 Reasons Why Isolated Leaders are Dangerous Leaders, lifeway.com, October 27, 2017

when you are not pursuing growth in your own faith or you have unconfessed sin, you are not the only one affected. In fact, you could be putting the rest of the body at risk.

Being connected means recognizing that we are better together when you show up; so show up. Being connected means resisting isolation, reaching out even when it's uncomfortable. Being connected means offering the amazing uniqueness that is YOU to the body so we can pursue the Gospel mission together.

### Questions

- What keeps you from showing up? How does your presence benefit others?
- How have you experienced isolation in leadership? What can you do to overcome/resist isolation?
- How do your gifts contribute well to your current leadership role?

### Next Steps

- Join a LifeGroup or 6 Pack to get connected.
- If you would like to talk with someone about why it is hard for you to connect, consider reaching out and making an appointment at our Calvary Life Counseling Center.