Practicing Jesus’ Way: Community

*“Renewing our minds and developing a biblical imagination”*

***Jesus’ Way***

**Life *Together*.**

Community is one of the most obvious features of Jesus’ way of living. Early in his ministry, he gathered a group of disciples around him and they shared life together until the very end. Life together is simply Jesus’ way. He could have set up an religious organization, but he didn’t. He could have set up a religious program, but he didn’t. He could have done his ministry individually, but he didn’t. Jesus arranged his life around transformational community with the disciples; they participated in Jesus’ redemptive mission alongside him.

***Embracing Jesus’ Way***

**Fellowship.**

Ultimately, community means being *together.* That was Jesus’ way. *Proximity, frequency and regularity* are all important so that life is experienced *together* in all its joys and challenges. This way, we can support and encourage each other as all of life is brought into the context of following Jesus.

**Commitment.**

Practicing community requires a commitment to be *with* others on a regular basis. While community is extremely rewarding, it can sometimes be inconvenient, frustrating, and exhausting. In such times, we don’t second guess Jesus’ way. We are committed to it. So we are committed to each other.

**Mutual Submission.**

Community includes openness to God’s work and direction that comes to us *through each other* as we *mutually submit* ourselves to Jesus. There is give and take. We stand in the gap for each other. We put ourselves on the line for each other that we might all grow in Christlikeness.

**Getting Started.**

* Think about the people God has put in your life with whom you might *mutually submit* to Jesus.
* Prayerfully consider and seek out those with whom you could regularly fellowship.
* Commit to each other, to life together, to regular fellowship, and to mutual submission to Jesus.

**Keys to remember:**

* Jesus’ way of life and ministry was community.
* One of Jesus’ finals prayers for us was unity in community (John 17).
* By God’s design, we are unique and complementary. Together, we are the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12)