

Connect. Grow. Serve.**Introduction**

God is an eternal community (small group) of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and He made us in His image (Gen 1:26). This means you were designed to live life in community. The command to love God is sewn together with the command to love others (Matt 22:37-40), and we will experience more of God, the more we experience community. A Christian's witness is only as powerful as the love demonstrated in community with one another. "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). Small groups allow us to demonstrate this kind of love to the outside world.

As believers, we are to connect with the Lord and one another; to grow in spiritual maturity; to serve as kingdom agents for our Lord. In Deuteronomy 6:5, God calls His people to love Him holistically with our heart, our soul and our might. We are best positioned to do this when we filter our understanding of the Word through the principles of connecting, growing and serving. As you read Scripture and listen to sermons, consider how God is urging you to connect with Him and His people. Discover how He wants you to grow in your knowledge and dependency on His Word, and to serve out the wealth of growth He has activated within you.

God's Word is not merely ink on paper, but it is meant to challenge you at your very core and spur you on to take action for His Kingdom. Any time you interact with God's Word is a great time to dig deep and see what God will do with your life!

Getting Started

Reflect on this week's sermon. What is one point from the sermon that resonates with you?

Let's Get Personal

1. **Connect:** What does the sermon have to say about how to connect with God? What is God teaching you? How does the passage that was used push you to connect with others? How has your connection to people, or lack of connection, affected your relationship with God?
2. **Grow:** What has challenged your thoughts and behaviors based on His Word? What do you need to change in your life to live in light of God's truth? How would you implement any necessary changes?
3. **Serve:** What action will you take as a result of God's Word? What responsibility do you have as an ambassador for Christ (2 Cor 5:20) to live out this principle in a tangible way? How can you be a practitioner of good works based on what you have discussed today?

Renew Your Mind

For one will hardly die for a righteous person; though perhaps for the good person someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:7-8