

Pete Campola

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Subject: now here's today's devotional

40 Days of Community

A Set of Thoughts, Ideas, Questions and Ponderings
Submitted for your Digestion
September 27, 2005 Day 3

Introduction: We are all in *"this"* 2gether. No one is getting out alive. As we explore what it means to be in community through Rick Warren's better together it is essential that we tailor make this study to fit our communities. This devotional is meant to be a conversation starter. It is personal musings on the daily readings' subject. If another author is not noted then the opinions expressed are those of Jodi Haier and only reflect her understandings and her journey. If you do not wish to receive a devotional a day for the next 40 days, please respond to this email with a thoughtful "no, thank you" " **Instead of just forwarding this *please* send people's email to me. I am not trying to be a control freak but I want to know where God's going with this. People viewing this on the webpage can contact the webmaster with any comments. THANKS! Jodi**

Fellowship 2gether: "cultivating a life in common"

(1Cor 1:10) Uh-Oh. Now I'm editing Rick Warren. That can't be good. Instead of cultivating a life *in* common, perhaps we should cultivate a life uncommon. Imagine a life where we "yield our preferences, comfort, goals, security, money, energy, or time for the benefit of someone else." (p. 20) It sounds very sacrificial. Where is the balance? The balance comes from love. Now we're talking about a life uncommon. How can we help each other with that? We can hold each other accountable. We can talk it out. We can experiment. We can try to see with the eyes of the blind. We can be with the outcast. We can help those paralyzed with desperation or frustration walk through their recovery. These behaviors are very risky. Our success is guaranteed. So the risk is not failure; the risk is in a changed life. 2gether we will have a life uncommon.

Grow 2gether: "accepting, affirming, and advising"

(Rom 15:7, 1Thess 5:11, Col 3:16)

Today's insight is from Mike Slaughter, senior pastor of Ginghamburg United Methodist church. (www.inghamburgchurch.org) He is in the middle of a sermon series entitled, "My Life – God's Purpose." Last Sunday's sermon was called "find it together." The series is based on Acts 9, the conversion of Saul. Mike points out that Saul only interacted with Jesus after the resurrection. Yet Jesus only told him what to do in a community of believers. It was in Damascus, where the believers had gathered, that Saul could experience a truly living Christ.

Contemplate today's quote: "The only way you can experience the physical presence of Jesus Christ and the clarity of His purpose is to experience that in community."

Also consider today's memory verse from 1John 4:20b: "People who don't love other believers, whom they have seen, can't love God, whom they have not seen." Interesting juxtaposition.

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Serve 2gether: “working 2gether with 1 heart & 1 purpose”

(Phil 2:2) When does a family meal begin? We start deliberations early. “What’s for dinner?” “I don’t know, what do you want?” “Did you run the dishwasher?” “Did you buy taco mix?” “Do we have any salsa left?” “Whose turn is it to set the table?” “What kind of Kool-Aid do you want to make?” Yes one person could ask and answer all of those questions. That’s not how it happens at our house. Everyone is involved. When we finally gather at the table we’ve already laid the groundwork for community or a WWF deathmatch. (Which sometimes can be confused for community?) Grace provides us with 1 heart & 1 purpose. Dinner is over too quickly and then a similar ritual is performed for clean-up. Regardless of what our days hold, this series of rituals truly makes us family, whether we’re related or not. Maybe this set of rituals is something we could adopt/adapt for our community project as well. Although, if it’s going to be a death match: sell tickets, get the concession contract and procure the licensing agreement.

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Worship 2gether: “come 2gether in my name”

(Matt 18:20) Today’s devotional is entitled, “Because It Is How We Love God.” Worship is how we love God as well. Think about what we do in worship, how we treat God’s children. Is our behavior indicative of how we love God? Is our offering to others or for ourselves? Isn’t our offering to God, in response to God’s love? What are we concerned about in worship? If the answer doesn’t include connecting to God, it is off the mark and insignificant. Worship is coming 2gether in Jesus’ name to love the Creator God. The Beatles song says “Come 2gether, right now, over me.” I think the significance is in the “over me.” Over what I want, over my needs, over my sin and over my selfishness to Your Love, Lord. Let’s come 2gether, right now.

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Reach Out 2gether: “get others to believe”

(Phil 1:27) Send a card. It can even be an e-card, just personalize it. Pray for someone, in thanksgiving. Then, in the card, say “During my daily prayers, I thanked God for you and your _____. I thought you should know that God and I have been talking about you.” Now comes the hard part. Do this for someone that you wouldn’t automatically think of thanking God for. It doesn’t have to be someone annoying or difficult. It could just be someone overlooked, underappreciated, invisible or underrated. This is opening a door, a window or heating duct to someone for God’s love to breeze in. You are exposing yourself as someone who prays. I think you are ready for the risk. Let me know how it goes.

Biloxi-Bound prayers Try to pray for them at 11 (that’s when they are meeting, it’s 10 there)

Savior of Heaven and Earth- Let our team be connected to your power source. Let our team be constantly connected to Your Love. As our team gives itself away, let them be reborn in you. We lift Roger, Marguerite, Roberta and Lina up to you, O Lord. Help them not only be good and faithful servants of Your Word, but emissaries of your love and faithfulness. Let the Holy Spirit be so evident in their lives, that Your will is done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give them their daily bread, so they may feed others. And forgive them their trespasses, as they forgive others, so their burdens are few. Lead them not into temptations they are not prepared for, for they are your children. Do not let evil things overcome them. For it is your kingdom, your power, and your glory that they are there to testify to, with their human presence, through Jesus. Amen.