

TALKING POINTS

NEXT LEVEL - HOW WE ARE CONNECTED

LEARNING IN

To Go to the next level in your relationship to God, it's all about *connection* - to God and to each other.

God has commissioned us as The Church with the mission of reaching the unreached, showing love and compassion to the world and helping strengthen and support each other as believers.

When we band together, we are able to more effectively care for each other, act on what God is calling us to, and reach out to the world around us. Our connection with each other becomes a model of love the world can see and identify with.

Our connection with each other is built on a fundamental call to build each other up. In a world of competition and isolation, we follow the model Jesus has set for us - to be in *unity* with Him and each other as we all seek together to serve our common Master. Pride, ego and envy have no place in this community as we remember we are all *one* - all part of the same body - in Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:10, Ephesians 4:1-6

Why is unity so important for us to have as believers in Jesus?

LIVING IT OUT

As connection is so essential to our growth and well-being in our relationship with God and each other, it's important to recognize the three things which most profoundly connect us:

Our Need For Hope - we all have a profound need for hope. However, our hope in the world typically leads us to disillusionment and disappointment. God's love, however does *not* disappoint. He does not change, and His love and mercy endures forever. For us as believers, the despair of the world turns into hope, which turns into joy because we have *assurance* and *certainty* in our future in Jesus.

Read Romans 5:2-5, Isaiah 40:31

Have you ever struggled with hope? What about your relationship with God causes you to hope?

Our Need For Each Other - what is certain is we are wired for connection. God built us this way, and as believers He has placed us into His beautiful community, the "Body" of Christ. God's will for us is to be joined together with other believers for the sake of His kingdom. These connections make us stronger and bring balance into our lives. These connections provide us encouragement, support and even correction and we always better off *together*.

Read Galatians 6:2, Ephesians 2:21-22, Romans 1:11-12, 1 Corinthians 12:25-27

Do you know what *your* role is in this "body" - this community of "joined together" believers?

Our Assigned Mission - is to go into the world and *make disciples*. We do this by loving people who are far from God and declaring the Good News of the Gospel in the power of the Spirit. We also accomplish this mission in serving and loving those around us. All of us as the "Body of Christ" are called to this same mission as we bring our various gifts to bear in this work. As His church, we represent Jesus to the world.

Read Matthew 28:19-20, Colossians 3:12, Philippians 2:1-3

Is there an impact you'd like to have for God, but are currently not? What can we do to be more engaged with the mission God has for us?