

DEPENDENT

vGroup Study



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Written by Dustin Turner.

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STOP MAKING EXCUSES

There's something to be said for crowds. Think about the things in life you've experienced – sporting events, concerts, birthday parties, graduations, family reunions, school. Imagine doing all of these things in isolation, alone. How different would each of these events be? Even if you're an introvert, experiencing these events alone would be odd. There's something natural to gathering with a group of people to celebrate and experience an event.

Throughout the pages of Scripture, community is highly valued. And part of the community aspect in the Bible is the importance of corporate gatherings. In the Old Testament, we see the Israelites gathering at Mount Sinai to worship and hear from the Lord. They gather around the temple to worship the Lord together. They gather to hear the reading and preaching of the Scriptures. And we see this very same thing in the New Testament. Acts 2:42–46 says,

⁴²And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42–47

Taking their cue from their Jewish background, the early church made it a priority to regularly gather together for worship. Before turning to Colossians 3:16–17, let's spend some time processing the importance of gathering corporately.

- Why do you think people love to gather as a group for any activity?

- What is the weakness of only doing things alone? What do you think is the power of gathering corporately?

- What do you think is the benefit of the church gathering corporately to worship?

Dependent

In Colossians 3:1–15, Paul addresses who we are to be in Christ. He notes that we should “set [our] minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth” (Colossians 3:2). Paul goes on to say, “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you” (Colossians 3:5) and “put on then as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience . . .” (Colossians 3:12). Immediately following these charges, Paul addresses what many scholars consider to be part of the corporate worship gathering. With Colossians 3:1–15 in mind, let’s read verses 16–17.

¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:16–17

- In Colossians 3:16–17, what does Paul command the Colossians to do? (Hint: Look at the beginning of verse 16).
- What is “the word of Christ?” (Hint: The word of Christ probably refers to the teaching about Christ and the teaching of Christ).
- Why is it important for us to “let the word of Christ dwell in [us] richly?”
- How does Paul say we do this? How does this happen in corporate worship? (Hint: what are two essential elements of corporate worship).
- How does the sermon help the word of Christ dwell richly in us?
- We often fail to see how important singing is in growing us as Christians. How does singing mature us in Christ?

Dependent

- If the corporate worship gathering is one of the primary places in which we “let the word of Christ dwell in [us] richly” why do so many Christians not prioritize it?

It’s interesting where Paul goes next in this passage. He’s just emphasized the importance of corporate worship, particularly teaching and singing, in our spiritual growth, and then in verse 17 he moves to this command: “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Let’s think about the relationship between verses 16 and verse 17.

- What does it mean to “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus?” (Hint: Think about the significance of doing something in the name of Jesus).
- How do you think obedience is associated with doing everything in the name of Jesus?
- With all of this in mind, what sort of relationship do you see between verses 16 and 17? (Hint: When we let the word of Christ dwell within us through corporate worship, we’re potentially more able to obey Jesus).
- How is letting the word of Christ dwell within us associated with our obedience?
- Why is obedience important to Christians?

For nearly 2,000 years the church has prioritized corporate worship. Why do we gather to worship? Ultimately God deserves our worship! But God does something incredible in our worship – He transforms us. When we worship God, he receives the glory due him and at the same time our worship of him changes what we feel, think, and do. On Sunday, Pastor Dustin challenged everyone to prioritize corporate worship as a spiritual discipline. Let’s close our discussion talking about how we can prioritize corporate worship.

Dependent

- How has prioritizing the corporate worship gathering allowed Jesus to transform you?
- When you don't feel like prioritizing the corporate worship gathering, how do you fight against those feelings?
- What is one thing you need to do now to better prioritize corporate worship in your life?
- How can you help other Christians better prioritize corporate worship?

Let's close our discussion praying for one another. Let's pray for a consistency as well as a devoted, non-legalistic heart as we continue to make corporate worship a spiritual discipline and habit.