

Connect Group notes 9 June 2025

Jo spoke to us on Sunday about how we live in a spiritual world within our faith community.

Read Ephesians 6:10-13

This was a letter to a community, not an individual. Our spiritual formation takes place in community.

We heard that our triune God is in fact a community, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are made in his image. *‘At the centre of the universe is a relationship’* (Daryl Johnson).

Discussion Points

1. Jo stated that though community is a gift to us, it can also be other things, particularly if we have been hurt within it.
 - How would you finish this sentence – “Community is...”
 - What are the joys of community?
 - What are the challenges?
 - Why does God encourage us to be in community, especially with regards to how we live out our faith?

2. We live in a world where the culture tries to deform us – to disunity, loneliness, fracture and fragmentation
 - Why are we prone in the west to individualising our Christian faith?
 - Why is considering our engagement with the wider church important in our spiritual formation?
 - How can we support those who feel lonely and disconnected to connect into faith community in a significant way?
 - What are the challenges to us as individuals in maintaining a healthy connection with the people of God. How can we ask others to encourage and support us in this?

3. We need a healthy sense of differentiation from others as well. We are saved FROM slavery, FOR worship, TO community – but this doesn't mean all we do is 'take'.
 - How can church life/programmes foster a consumerist mentality amongst some people?
 - What is it about us getting involved and serving within our faith community that fosters connection?

PRAY and Apply

Jo asked us three questions in her message. Consider these as a group or as individuals

1. How far have I drifted into the cultural current of radical individualism?
2. How connected am I into community?
3. If loneliness was a scale of 1-10, how lonely am I?

In response to this...

1. Pray; tell God you're lonely.
2. Check our perceptions of other people and if this is preventing us from connecting well.
3. What would happen if we put our phones away in situations we might have an opportunity to connect ?
4. If I've done all the above – what else could I possibly do?
5. Learn how to manage expectations – relationship building takes time.