

SMALL GROUP COMMUNITY | WEEK 1

written by Gary Meeks

Being in biblical community is a vast blessing. There are so many benefits, ranging from encouragement, prayer, and accountability, as well as physical benefits such as meals and help when you are moving. However, right alongside the benefits are the risks and challenges. Jesus instructs us as believers that before we enter into a discipleship commitment, we are to count the cost. Luke 14:27 tells us that following Jesus requires us to bear our cross, and without doing so, we cannot be His disciple. So, considering a commitment to take part of community and small groups at College Park calls us to count the cost of following Jesus.

Jesus says in verse 28: "For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?" He goes on to compare the idea of lacking forethought with a builder who doesn't have enough money to finish his project or a king who goes to war without sufficient soldiers. During this first week of the Community Ordinary Challenge, we want to challenge you to examine your heart, your life, and your ability to fulfill the obligations of community when it comes to your own investment in the lives of others. We hope to help set you up well in regard to your expectations for small groups as well as in the expectations on you as a member of a small group community.

This first week, get a glimpse of community in the Scriptures and allow the Lord to draw you into the idea that community is meant for you to give yourself away in order that you might receive.

Read | Acts 2:42-47. This is a passage that describes the attitude of the individuals in the early church. Take some time to work through this passage, making notations of what stands out to you.

1. What in this passage reminds you of what community should be like?
2. What barriers do you notice in emulating the behavior of those mentioned? Do you resist the attitude displayed here?

3. If you feel the church today is not like this, how do you see yourself being a conduit of change in the culture of community at College Park and in a current or future Small Group?
4. What character traits are present in the individuals mentioned? What kind of character development has to happen before these activities happen?

Pray | Use the template of Acts 2:42-47 to ask God to prepare you for how He might use you in the lives of others.

Take this passage and apply it to real situations in your own life.

Pray this passage back to the Lord, that He would embed these attitudes in your life.

Pray that God gives you a vision for how you can pour your life and efforts out for others in your current or future group.

Do | Memorize Acts 2:42-47; this is a theme for the type of Small Group Member you want to be. Consider reading the book *Community: Taking Your Small Group Off Life Support* by Brad House. It is a great resource and is strongly aligned with our vision for Small Groups at College Park.