



[study guide]

RELATIONSHIPS: Week 5 10.28.12: Ephesians 5:19-21

[warm up]

When you think of your family, what are some of the positive qualities and negative qualities that come to mind?

How is the church like a family? What are some of the positive and negative experiences that you have had from being part of a church family?

What are ways that we as individuals and we as a community can strengthen the family of faith despite our differences and flaws?

[digging deeper]

Read this weekend's teaching passage: Ephesians 5:19-21

Notice first, that verse 19 doesn't start an independent thought, but is connected to verse 18. How does the end of verse 18, in being filled with the Spirit, make verses 19-21 even possible?

Using a concordance or an online Bible website (youversion.com; bible.cc; biblegateway.com; etc), take a few minutes to look up the words "sing", "song" and "hymn" to see how often they appear and in what context. What can you learn about the value of singing in the family of God?

What is one or two of your favorite worship songs and why? Why is music and singing such a powerful expression of worship and how does it strengthen the connection we have with fellow believers in Christ? What have been some of the most significant times of singing out to God that you have experienced in your Christian journey? Why do some people struggle with singing and what are some ways that can be resolved?

In verse 21 we are told to give thanks always and for everything. Is that even possible?

How do the following verses strengthen our understanding of giving thanks even when things are difficult?

Heb. 12:28

Phil 4:6-7

1 Thess. 5:18

How can a community of grateful people make a larger impact in this world?



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One of the most difficult words and concepts for us is “submission”. In verse 21 believers are told to submit to one another. What is our motive for this submission according to the verse? How does positional authority, relational authority and spiritual authority play into that instruction?

What are practical ways that we submit to one another in the family of God? How does that mutual submission strengthen us as a community of believers?

[living it out]

Here at CVC we strive to live out our faith in Christ within caring community. Think through the three characteristics of Christian community that emerged from the Ephesians verses above, and evaluate how you are experiencing them in your own Christian journey answer these questions to help you:

- 1- Do I find myself compelled to sing spiritual songs of praise to God whether alone, in a small group or in the larger gathering (making melody to the Lord)?
- 2- Am I encouraged and edified during times of corporate singing to God?
- 3- Do I live a life of gratitude, constantly aware of the many blessings I daily receive from God my Father?
- 4- Am I able to express thanksgiving to God even when I am going through difficult times?
- 5- Do I struggle to submit to other believers who try to utilize their spiritual or relational authority to speak into my life?
- 6- Am I able to humble myself and sacrifice my personal preferences and desires within the Christian community so that others may benefit or grow?

Close in prayer with the answers to those six questions as prayer targets along with anything else the Lord impresses on your heart. Please also pray that we continue to grow together as a caring Christian community here at CVC and that we faithfully express the three characteristics mentioned above from the Ephesians verses.