

NEW COMMUNITY COVENANT CREATION WEEK #2

Intro

We continue this week to unpack our seven New Community rhythms. This week we look at “Be Glad and Eat,” “Be Glad and Enter God’s Story,” and “Belong and Listen and Pray.”

Be Glad and Eat

The rhythm in a nutshell is:

1. Be Glad and **Eat**—God meant food and the sharing of a meal at the table to be an act of worship unto him, the great Provider. In our New Communities, We will seek to redeem our eating as a worship unto God.

The Biblical Basis for “Be Glad and Eat!”

Let’s briefly survey the Bible to get a sense of how much cheerful eating is in the heart of God.

Turn to Genesis 1:28-29 and read it aloud together.

- a. The context of God’s provision and command about food is his desire to bless. What does God bless Adam and Eve to do?
- b. In the midst of God’s blessing to be fruitful and multiply, God tags on the detail of providing food for Adam and Eve. Why do you think God does this? Why might food be important for the mission God has given them?

Turn to Genesis 47:13 and read it aloud together.

- a. This verse describes the reality of hunger and famine. Have you ever had a season of scarcity? Or are you in touch with a scarce situation locally or somewhere in the world? How has this season of scarcity caused you to be deeply grateful for food?

Turn to Psalm 63:3-5 and read it aloud together.

- a. How is rich food a metaphor for God’s steadfast love?

Turn to Isaiah 25:6 and read it aloud together.

- a. This passage is a prophecy of our eternal destiny in God’s new creation. What does this verse tell us about our eternity with Jesus?

Turn to Matthew 25:31-36 and read it aloud together.

- a. What does this passage tell us about the importance of feeding outsiders, especially the impoverished hungry?

Turn to Acts 2:46-47 and read it aloud together.

- a. Keeping in mind that this passage is the first portrait of the church's life together, how important do you think eating is to the worshipful life of the church?

What Will This Look Like Practically for Our New Community?

Answer the following questions to help paint a clear picture of how you will be glad in Christ and express that gladness by eating together as a New Community.

Try and boil down your answers to 3-5 clear and specific action points. Your facilitator will record the points into a covenant template.

- a. What meals/snacks will we share with one another, and how often?
- b. How often will we try to eat with others we are trying to reach, meeting with them outside of our New Community gatherings? AND/OR how will we invite others to join us at the table of our New Community and show outsiders hospitality?
- c. Are we OK with the presence of alcohol in moderation as a sincere expression of the "fruit of the vine" and recognizing God's hand in the fruition of all our blessings? Do we have any recovering friends to whom we should show sensitivity and whose blessing we should ask first?
- d. How can we intentionally recognize God as the great Giver of every good gift when we eat together? Will we toast? Will we pray? Will we sing a hymn or melody? Will someone share a brief testimony?
- e. How will we intentionally pursue our meals/snacks as a pointer to our great hope in Jesus —his practice of sharing intimate meals with his disciples, feeding the multitudes out of compassion, and the final marriage supper of the Lamb?

Be Glad and Enter God's Story

The rhythm in a nutshell is:

3. Be Glad and **Enter God's Story**—This rhythm is about growing in our knowledge and experience of the gospel story as laid out in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation with Jesus and our salvation in him as the focal point.

The Biblical Basis for "Be Glad and Enter God's Story"

Turn to the following passages and share what you see in terms of God's call to us to grow in our knowledge of the gospel.

- a. Psalm 119:81-88
- b. Luke 24:13-27, 44
- c. Philippians 1:3-11
- d. 2 Timothy 3:14-17

e. 2 Peter 1:1-8

What Will This Look Like Practically for Our New Community?

Answer the following questions to help paint a clear picture of how you will be glad in Christ and enter God's redemption story as a New Community.

Try and boil down your answers to 3-5 clear and specific action points. Your facilitator will record the points into a covenant template.

- a. What steps should each of us take this year to grow as disciples who make disciples (help each person identify at least two to three goals)?
- b. What study or training do we need to go through as a group in light of where we all need to grow (keep in mind personal discipleship goals)? Will we follow up on the sermon and study the previous Sunday's passage? Do we want to study a book of the Bible together? Will we do a book study? Do we want to use resources like Right Now Media and do a video bible study?
- c. How often do we want to study the Scriptures together during a typical month? One week, two weeks, three weeks? How will we balance this with the other rhythms we want to maintain—eating, being a blessing, listening and praying, celebrating, recreating?
- d. How will we express our love to one another as fellow sojourners in God's gospel story? As brothers and sisters adopted by the Father in the great story of redemption? What actions will we commit to in order to express our love for one another as brothers and sisters (think of the one-another passages)?
- e. How will we express our accountability to one another as fellow sojourners in God's gospel story? As brothers and sisters adopted by the Father in the great story of redemption? (This question overlaps with our rhythm of covenanting.)
- f. Are any of us who believe the Jesus and his gospel not yet baptized? What steps will we take to get baptized, if we haven't already?