

*“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”*  
Colossians 3:12

### 3. In real fellowship people experience \_\_\_\_\_.

Assess:

Who do I know in my life who is going through a difficult time right now?

Apply:

In some way this week, reach out to the person identified above. It could be as simple as a telephone call or a card, or spending an evening or afternoon with them over a meal.

*Compassion: the deep feeling of sharing the suffering of another, together with the inclination to give aid or support or to show mercy.*  
(The American Heritage Dictionary)

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*“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”*  
Colossians 3:13

### 4. In real fellowship people experience \_\_\_\_\_.

Assess:

Which are you more passionate about, mercy or justice?

Apply:

Is there someone in your life who has hurt you, but whom you have not forgiven? As a first step, ask God to give you the desire to forgive that person.

*“Every Christian community must realize that not only do the weak need the strong, but also that the strong cannot exist without the weak. The elimination of the weak is the death of fellowship.”*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

## Group Discussion Questions

### Connecting

1. When you were a child, who was the person whose love you trusted most? What was it about this person that won your trust?

### Growing

2. Read Acts 2: 38-47 together
3. What are the characteristics that made this community so extraordinary?
4. How did this community do the following?
  - Express love for one another.
  - Express love for God.
  - Help one another grow spiritually.
  - Reach out beyond their community to serve others and to spread the news about Jesus?
  - Surrender their whole lives to God.
5. Why don’t we experience a community dynamic as vibrant as the one described in Acts 2?

### Applying

6. Fellowship in verse 42 is the Greek work *koinonia*, which means “sharing what we have in common” because of Jesus. What aspect of this sharing would you like your spiritual community to grow in? Your small group?
7. Of course, it’s easy to point out what others have to do (wink, wink). What specific areas of your life do you need to grow in order to make your answers to the previous question a reality?
8. How would your life need to change in order for you to participate fully in a community that devoted itself to the priorities listed in question 4 above?

Thought for this week: Remember that consuming all kinds of spiritual knowledge will only make you spiritually fat unless you exercise the spiritual principles which will help make you spiritually fit!

## Application Ideas

1. Go over the “ASSESS” and “APPLY” headings from the sermon notes. If you have not done so already, write out your answers to the different questions in your notes, in your journal, or on a separate piece of paper. Now act on them! *This will help ingrain the application of each principle.*
2. If you haven’t already, join a small group! There is still room for you to join a group on Wednesday nights. Call Brad Zinken if you are interested in being part of a Sunday morning small group (763-755-7197).
3. Practice compassion and mercy! Send a note of encouragement to someone this week who is struggling or having a difficult time.
4. Pray each day for opportunities to exercise mercy, compassion, and grace to others. Ask someone to pray along with you and report successes and struggles in these prayers.

## Daily Reading Plan

Monday – 1 John 1: 1-10

Tuesday – Acts 2: 38-47

Wednesday – Colossians 3: 1-21

Thursday – Look up half of the “One Another’s” and read in context\*

Friday – Look up the other half of the “One Another’s” and read in context\*

\* “One Another’s” scripture references can be found in a bulletin insert.

Also during this week: Chapters 18, 19, 20, 21 from “*Purpose-Driven Life*” by Rick Warren

Memory Verse for Week: Colossians 3:13

*“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”*

## Additional Resources

1. Life Together: A discussion of Christian fellowship, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. *This classic book on Christian community comes highly recommended from Pastor Dave, Pastor Sean, and Annette Beseman. Pastor Sean has a copy to lend out.*
2. Everybody’s Normal Till You Get to Know Them, John Ortberg. *With humor, insight, and a gift for storytelling, Ortberg shows how community pays tremendous dividends in happiness, health, support and growth. It’s where all of us weird, unwieldy people encounter God’s love in tangible ways and discover the transforming power of being loved, accepted, and valued just the way we are.*
3. Making Small Groups Work: What every small group leader needs to know. Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend (authors of Boundaries)

These and other resources are available at Northwestern Bookstores (www.nwbooks.com) or through Christian Book Distributors (www.christianbook.com)

Contact Annette Beseman (ext. 206; a.beseman@redeemerfridley.org) to review Redeemer’s library of small group curriculum.



# Doing Life Together

Annette Beseman..... *Groups – Real Fellowship*  
February 8, 2004 1 John 1:5-9

## What is *real* fellowship?

### 1. In real fellowship people experience

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#### Assess:

Do I have at least one relationship in my life where I can be completely authentic — warts and all?

What keeps me from being authentic in my close relationships?

#### Apply:

Pray for God to reveal to you the concerns and cares of your life that you have “hidden in the darkness”. Ask Him to give you the courage to share these things with a person or small group that you trust.

*“If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another...”*

1 John 1:5-7

*“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

1 John 1:8-9

### 2. In real fellowship people experience

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#### Assess:

Review the list of “one-anothers.” Which ones do you do well? Which ones are challenges for you?

Evaluate your close relationships. Are there any that you have allowed to become one-sided?

#### Apply:

Choose a “one-another” that you find challenging. Ask God to give you an opportunity to exercise it this week. When he does—just do it!

*“Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.”*

Romans 14:19

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*

Proverbs 27:17

Look for a way to be the “giver” in a currently one-sided relationship.