

This week Pastor Sharon brings us Part 1 of the six-part series "40 Days of Community" with the message entitled "Why We Need Each Other."

Sunday we kicked off an ambitious effort to welcome new people into our Vineyard family and strengthen family ties with those who already call Vineyard Community Church home. Whether you are hosting, leading, or participating as a member of a small group, it is important for you to understand the vital role you play within the community of believers. Just as God has given you five main purposes for your life (worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and missions), He also gave five key needs for other believers.

First, you need others to walk with you. "Walking" is an action verb. See yourself moving forward on a journey. When you undertake that journey within the context of a community, you can share the joys and hardships with others, lightening the load for yourself and blessing them in the same way.

Second, you need others to work with you. You were created to do good works (Eph. 2:10), so it only makes sense that when you work with others you can accomplish much more than you could by yourself.

Third, you need others to watch out for you. What happens when you feel like you are under attack and it seems like the whole world is falling apart and you are ready to throw in the towel? When you have a close friend to call on for support (or better yet several close friends), you get the advice or encouragement that you need to keep going. Friends will also help keep you on the path when you start to stray off course.

Fourth, you need others to wait and weep with you. Inevitably, sorrow and heartbreak will find you at some time. Having loving friends who will be there to help you through those times can make a big difference in how quickly and how well you recover.

Fifth and finally, you need others to witness with you. A big part of our calling as Christ followers is to go out and share the Good News of the Gospel. Getting involved in a small group is a great way to become comfortable discussing matters of faith. You will be that much better prepared to share with those who still need to hear about God's amazing love.

Hopefully, you are plugged into a small group. Hopefully, you are doing the devotional reading each day. Hopefully, you have stepped out and are actively participating in a small group that fits your schedule and meets your needs. Do you see how much you need other believers? Do you see how much they need you?