

SESSION 02

Share Your Joys and Sorrows



Overview

The Lord's Supper began as a full meal, centered around Jesus, done together in community, in joyful celebration of his life, death, and resurrection. At the heart of the table was a deep and honest communion with God and with one another.

We all know the experience of sitting at a table with other well-meaning disciples of Jesus and experiencing the opposite of communion — uncertainty about how to bring the deeper, more honest parts of our lives to the table, as conversation more naturally stays at the surface. But we were made to share our lives with others — our delights and burdens — and to experience the joy and comfort of being known.

Our tables can become a place for more than good food and interesting anecdotes; they can be a place where we honestly bring our joys and sorrows to those we love and who love us — a place of genuine communion.

Reflection Questions

When instructed, circle up in triads (smaller groups of 3-5 people) and discuss the following questions:

- 01 What did your experience of sharing a meal together this week look like, and how was it for you?
- 02 How does the prospect of sharing a weekly meal make you feel? Intimidated? Excited? Anxious?
- 03 How social do you consider yourself to be, and how does that influence your desire or capacity for sharing a weekly meal in community?
- 04 What is one thing you can do to improve your preparation and planning for the next meal you share?

Teaching

Key Scripture

Mark 14v22-24

Session summary

- The ultimate goal of sharing a meal together is for the table to become a place of communion with God and with one another.
- We experience this communion when we share our joys and sorrows with a community that is growing in love and trust.
- We share our joys because:
 - God is the most joyful being in all the universe, and He designed our life together to be built around joy.
 - Joy is not our default state, and so, to become people of joy, we require “the discipline of celebration.”
 - Joy is an act of defiance in a culture of fear and outrage.
- We share our sorrows because:
 - We are not built to carry our wounds, fears, and needs on our own.
 - Even Jesus modeled the importance of inviting friends into our sorrows in the Garden of Gethsemane.
 - The single most important factor in determining whether our pain shatters or strengthens us is whether or not it finds “a relational home” in community.
- While this takes trust and time, the best place to start is by doing life together around a table and beginning to share honestly as you do.

Teaching Notes

As you watch Session 02 together, feel free to use this page to take notes.

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Discussion Questions

Now it's time for a conversation about the teaching. Pause the video for a few minutes to discuss in small groups:

- 01 As you listened, what most stood out to you?
- 02 Does the act of celebrating — whether it is celebrating yourself or someone else — feel natural or unnatural to you? Why?
- 03 On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 represents complete transparency and 1 represents no transparency, how transparent are you in your current relationships? Why do you think that is?
- 04 Reflect on a positive and a negative experience you have had sharing your burdens in a relationship or group. What made the difference?

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Closing Prayer

Take a few deep breaths, become aware of God's presence, and pray this prayer slowly, leaving short silence between each line.

God, you held nothing of yourself
back from us, sharing your life,
your heart, your feasts, and your
sorrows. Help us to do the same with
each other now, braving vulnerability,
and experiencing the liberation of
finding true belonging, today.

Amen.



Exercise

At your next weekly meal, go around the table and share the highs and lows of the week.

- Your highs could be what you're grateful for, excited about, or something that is currently bringing you joy.
- Your lows could be what you're grieving, what you're fearful about, or a moment that was difficult for you during the week.
- Regardless of what your high or low is, be honest and let your community into what you're celebrating and what you're finding challenging.

Reach Exercise

Get together with a trusted friend and share honestly about a struggle you're currently facing — whether that's a wound, a fear, or a need.

- This might be a struggle that you don't yet feel comfortable sharing with a larger group during your weekly meal.
- Rather than holding it inside, set up a coffee or tea date with a trusted friend and bear your heart to them.
- Or turn it around and, if you want to offer support to someone else, consider reaching out to a friend who is in a difficult season and encouraging them.

Practice Reflection

Before your next time together with the group for Session 03, take five to ten minutes to journal out your answers to the following three questions:

- 01 What did I find most difficult about this exercise?

- 02 What emotions did I experience in sharing my joys and sorrows?

- 03 How do I sense the Spirit inviting me deeper into honesty in community going forward?

Note: As you write, be as specific as possible. While bullet points are just fine, if you write it out in narrative form, your brain will be able to process your insights in a more lasting way.

Reflection Notes

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Keep Growing (Optional)

The following resources were created to enhance your experience of this Practice, but they are entirely optional.

Read

Made to Belong by David Kim (Chapters 03–05)

Listen

Rule of Life Podcast on Community (Episode 02)

Bonus Conversations

If you would like to slow down this four-week Practice to give your community more time to sit in each week's teaching and spiritual exercise, you can pause and meet for an optional conversation in the Appendix.



