



## STAND ALONE: DESIGNED FOR COMMUNITY

July 7, 2019  
Joy Roberts

### BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

*"What does human flourishing look like in Genesis 1 +2? Dwelling in the Presence of your creator."*

–Joy

### MAIN TEXT(S):

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. (Genesis 1:1-2)*

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:1-3)*

*The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." (Genesis 2:18)*

*Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world." (John 4:39-42)*

### MESSAGE SUMMARY

The Bible places a priority on community. God himself exists and acts in the community of the Trinity. In Genesis 1 and 2, God creates humanity, male and female, in his image. Humanity together reflects God's character better than any singular human on their own. The first thing in creation that God says is not good is man being alone. Even in the perfection of the Garden of Eden, being alone is not good. God desires us to be together.

However, once sin entered the world, community became more difficult. The strategy of the Enemy is to divide us, isolate us, and separate us from one another. In our own modern world, we can simply become too busy and entranced by our technology to interact with others. This is not how it should be. God is always working to redeem the things that sin has marred, including our communities and relationships. John 4 demonstrates to us how even those who have been rejected by their community, those who are broken, can be used by God to not only become more whole, but to bring their community to Jesus as well. God created us to be in community. Though sin may have marred that plan, God is always working to redeem and restore.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping*

### LEAN IN

*These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. Who is your longest standing friend? How did you meet? How long have you known them?
2. If you got to plan a dream trip with two or three friends, who would you bring with you and where would you want to go?
3. When you hear the word "community" what comes to mind?
4. What's the best community you've ever been a part of? This could be a student organization in college, a place of work, church group, family, etc.

### LOOK DOWN

*These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.*

*Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max*

1. In Genesis 1 & 2, what is the first thing that God says is not good? What does that teach

- us about God's plan for humanity?
2. Looking at John 1:1-3 and Genesis 1, what additional information does John give us about the creation account? What do these passages tell us about Jesus' role in creation?
  3. What words would you use to describe the woman at the well in John 4? What does the Bible tell us about her? What do you think her life was like? How do you think the people in her town thought of her?
  4. What is the woman's response to Jesus in John 4? What does she go and do? What is the outcome of her reaction?
  5. How did the woman at the well in John 4 impact her community?

### **LOOK OUT**

*These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.*

*Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max*

1. Genesis 2:18 says that even in the perfection of the Garden of Eden, it's not good for people to be alone. How are people isolated today? What keeps people from being in community and connecting with others? How has technology impacted our ability to connect?
2. What are some of the outcomes of this isolation and loneliness? How have you seen this play out in the lives of your neighbors, friends, and family?
3. How might people in our own church community be isolated or lonely? What might keep people from finding community even in a church environment? How do past hurts keep people from connecting?
4. Our God exists and acts (as we see in Genesis 1 and John 1) in community. Based on the passages that we read, what do you think God's original design for community looked like? Where have you seen this lived out the best?
5. How have you seen God use people like the woman at the well to positively impact their communities, either today or in recent history? This could be someone you know personally or someone you've heard of.

### **LOOK IN**

*These are questions that help you consider personal application.*

*Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max*

1. How/when have you experienced loneliness and isolation in your own life? How has community caused you harm?
2. How has God worked in your life to provide community and support for you? Has God ever redeemed a hurt caused by community for his/your good?
3. What might God be calling you to do to help provide community and support for others?
4. What could you do (big or small) that would share God's love for humanity with your community (friends, neighbors, co-workers, family, etc.)?
5. How could you, like the woman at the well, use your own story to positively impact those around you?

### **LIVE IT OUT**

*These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.*

*Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. If you are currently feeling alone and isolated or hurt by a community, how could your group pray for you as you seek to find a better sense of community and heal past wounds? What could they do to support you?
2. What can you do this week in your neighborhood, among your friends, or at your work to foster more community and connectedness and keep people from feeling isolated?

**DISCUSSION  
QUESTIONS,  
CONT.**

This could be as simple as committing to look at your phone less, as big as hosting a neighborhood block party, or anything in between. The sky's the limit!

3. How might God be calling you, like the woman at the well, to use your own story of how you met Jesus to impact those around you? What's one thing your group can pray for you and/or one thing you can do this week to answer God's call?

*NOTE: On the following page you will find a set of sermon notes created by Charissa Burns, an artist who calls B4 home. We include them purely for your enjoyment and encouragement, courtesy of Charissa. You can follow her on the 'Gram @charissaburnsstudio*