



HOLLYWOOD ADVENTIST CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

These are the notes resulting from a group discussion during the Sabbath morning worship service at the Hollywood Adventist Church, May 9, 2009. The discussion was guided by five topics drawn from two passages in 1 John—3:16–24 and 4:7–21. There were five stations in the sanctuary for groups of about 20 people each. After 5 minutes of discussion, people were rotated to another group. At the end of the discussion a leader from each group presented some of the comments and ideas generated. These are unfiltered results; if you have questions about anything... come talk with us!

DWELLING IN SCRIPTURE

1 John 3:16–24

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

1 John 4:7–21

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we

have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IS...

1. Trinitarian community (abiding)
2. Fearless community (bold)
3. Forgiving community
4. Incarnational community (sent)
5. Eucharistic community (sacrificial, economic implications)

THE QUESTION

If we were to take this vision of community seriously, what kind of shared commitment would we need to make?

THE RESPONSES

TRINITARIAN COMMUNITY (ABIDING)

Trinitarian Group 1

- Love each other in the morning in spite of the ugliness
- Follow steps of Jesus
- Allowing us into each other's lives
- No automatic—learned, like exercise
- Presence
- To be present without agenda
- Living in presence
- Purposeful

Trinitarian Group 2

- Constant renewing commitment
- Regular outlets for involvement
- Action
- Volunteer our presence
- Welcoming new people
- Work together
- Accountability
- Proactive
- Connection
- Going beyond the church
- Intentional awareness

FEARLESS COMMUNITY (**BOLD**)

Fearless Group 1

- Honest with each other
- Trust in God
- Being willing to take a risk
- Reaching out to others/to care for others

Fearless Group 2

- Trusting each other
- Acknowledging that there are things to be afraid of. Identifying fears.
- Face fears, get out of comfort zone
- Being strength for someone else's weakness/ vice-versa
- Overcoming fear with Love

FORGIVING COMMUNITY

Forgiving Group 1

- Forgiveness in actions
- Friendliness
- Forgiveness is an action
- Presentation of forgiveness

Forgiving Group 2

- Learn what forgiveness is and what it means to be forgiven
- Being open about flaws/"sins"
- Being loving and nonjudgemental when people open up
- Having a "Sinners Anonymous" recognize your own faults
- Communication, Forgive and forget

INCARNATIONAL COMMUNITY (**SENT**)

Incarnational Group 1

- Jesus' example.
- He became one of us—we need to become "one" with the community.
- Examples: potluck with homeless people. Get out of the comfort zone.
- Church/community are the same.

Incarnational Group 2

- Sal—we have a responsibility to go out into world and be missional
- Sarah—it implies a purpose. To spread the word of Christ
- Emily—the word "Incarnational" makes me think of something that came from one place and is sent somewhere else.
- Each individual must experience a conversion in themselves, before we go out. Otherwise people will detect fraud.
- Rob—look at it from atheist perspective. Why would I want what you're sending?
- Is it about the "thing" or "message" we're sending? Or is it about living a revolutionary, abundant life in a place. Then people just see it and want it.

EUCCHARISTIC COMMUNITY (SACRIFICIAL, ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS)

Eucharistic Group 1

- Why did you join this group?
- Megan—I have problems with time commitment.
- Wayne—Balance between taking care of own family and helping with church needs.
- When you have nothing—liberal. When you have something—conservative
- Emily—New testament model scares me. Socialist. I like individualism of America. But when someone is in need, it becomes church's responsibility.
- New Testament model—too extreme?
- Leslie—I like the NT model, I like that it's socialist. But where do you draw lines so no one abuses system.
- Vienna—He admonishes us to sacrifice, lay down lives for each other. How does that manifest itself literally.

Eucharistic Group 2

- Hotline help (funds for this)
- Open with our needs
- Pay off each others' debt