



[GREETING]

Beautiful people of Doxa Deo Hatfield, it is such a privilege to be able to come and share some word with you this morning.



[SERMON CONTEXT]

As many of you know we are in week 2 of our series entitled “This is Us” and it is a look at some of the **things** that we have said **make us, us**. What is it that makes **Doxa Deo Hatfield** what it is. And what will we **never apologise for?**

[I AM A READER / ALL STORIES HAVE COMPANIONS]



Some of you know me well enough to know that I **read rather widely**. Everything from **Shakespeare** to **Sherlock Holmes** to **Graphic Novels** to **Dystopian Fiction**. You name it, and I probably love reading it. If someone were to ask me what makes me, me. It would probably be one of the things that I'd mention. I **love words**, but more than that, I **love stories**. I love to see the **rise, fall** and **greater rise** of the **Character** as they go on their **adventure**. And you know what almost every carefully crafted story has in common? The **hero** will almost always have a **companion**, or at best, a **group of them** that go on the journey with them. And I believe the reason for this is because every **writer knows** the **inalienable truth** that what we **all desire is to know and be**

known by others, but also the reality that given to our own devices, we will never reach the heights we are destined to reach. We need people by our side. And they need us.

[LOTR / SAM IS THE TRUE HERO]



My wife and I recently watched the Lord of the Rings trilogy again. We have the Directors Cut Box Set at home and every now and then we pull it out and watch it again, because a movie like The Lord of the Rings never gets old. But after watching this film many many times, the one thing we both agree on is that Frodo is not the true hero of Lord of the Rings, it's his friend Sam. Because the honest truth is, if Sam had not been alongside him, Frodo never would have made it to the end of his journey. He needed a Sam to walk with, to

carry him, to help him when he was making the wrong decision and to ward off what would otherwise have been a very lonely journey. And Sam needed him too...

[JESUS SENT THEM OUT TWO BY TWO]



LUKE 10:1 (CSB)

After this, the Lord appointed seventy-two others, and he sent them ahead of him **in pairs** to every town and place where he himself was about to go.

Jesus knew this about us...

In the book of Luke, Chapter 10, **Jesus send out** His disciples, and when he does so, do you know what he does? He sends them out **two** by **two**. Why do you think that is?

[LAST WEEK / MISSION – MINISTERED IN GROUPS]



Just **last week** when we sent everybody out to go **pray** for **Hatfield**, do you know what I **kept seeing**? I kept seeing **groups** of our **people** approaching folks together. Why? Because there is **something deeply encouraging** about knowing that you are **not doing this life alone**, but that you have someone at your back as we seek to serve God together.

[COMMUNITY IS NOT FOR ME]

But even as I say this, I know some of you are sitting here going: “This **Community thing** you guys keep speaking about, it’s **not for me.**”

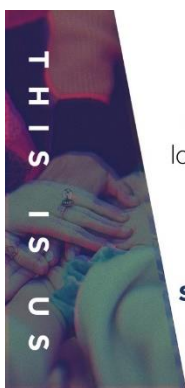
[REASONS – LIE-NOTHING TO OFFER/PRIDE-OTHERS HAVE NOTHING TO OFFER US]

And either it's because we believe the **lie** that we have **nothing to offer** others (which underestimates what God is able to do in and through us) or we come from the **Prideful stance** that believes **others have nothing to offer us**. I say prideful, but I also know that often this viewpoint is also often borne out of **relational hurt**.

[YOU WILL NEVER LIVE OUT YOUR CALLING/PURPOSE W/O PPL]

But any which way you are leaning, the one thing I can tell you is that you will **never** be able to **fully live out** your **calling** and **purpose without** other **believers** by your side to **sharpen** you, **encourage** you and **love** you as you live all out for God.

[1 JOHN 4:7-11, 19-21]

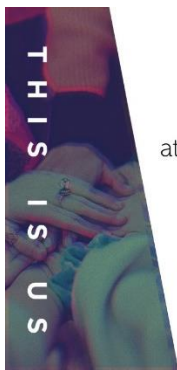


1 JOHN 4:7-11, 19-21(CSB)

7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for **love comes from God**. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 **This is how God showed his love** among us: **He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.**

1 John 4:7-11, 19-21 says: **7**Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **8**Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9**This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

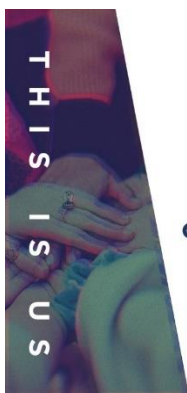


1 JOHN 4:7-11, 19-21(CSB)

10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. **11** Dear friends, **since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**

19 We love because he first loved us.

10This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. **11**Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **19**We love because he first loved us.

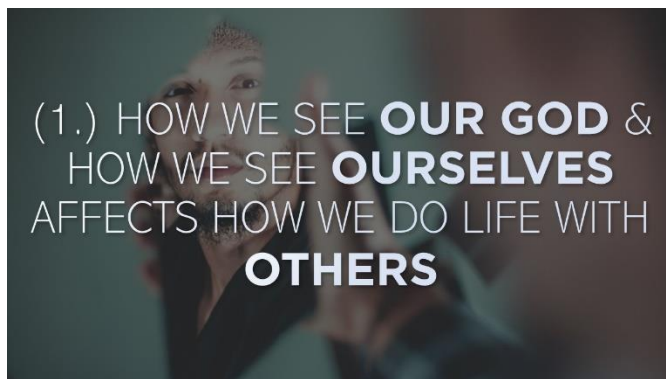


1 JOHN 4:7-11, 19-21(CSB)

20 Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For **whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.** **21** And he has given us this command: **Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.**

20Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. 21And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

[HOW WE SEE GOD AND OTHERS AFFECTS...]



You see, how we **see** our **God** and how we **see ourselves** will vastly effect how we **do life** with others.

[GOD PAID A HEFTY PRICE / PRICE DICTATES VALUE]

We start by realizing that **God loved us** in the most **extravagantly beautiful way**. I cannot fathom loving anyone enough to give up what God gave just to have us reconciled to Him. The **price dictates** the

value of the **item**. What someone is willing to pay for something dictates it's worth.

[OUTRAGEOUS AUCTION ITEMS]

I googled to see what some of the most **outrageous Auction items** have gone for in the last few years...



This **1943 Patek Phillippe Watch**, one of only 4 of it's kind was purchased for a cool \$11 million dollars at auction in 2016.



How about **Dorothy's Ruby Slippers** from The Wizard of Oz? Any guesses? They were auctioned off in 2000 for \$660 000.



Finally, how much would you guess was paid for a mint condition copy of the first ever appearance of Superman in **Action Comics issue #1**? \$3.25 million ladies and gentlemen.

[ITEMS = SML VALUE PARTS / WHAT WAS PAID GIVES VALUE]

Each of these **items** has very **little value** when I **break** them **down** to their **parts**. A **comic book** is paper and ink and illustration. The **ruby slippers** are shoes with a few sequins pasted on them. The **watch**, however beautiful consists of a few levers and gears, yes, exquisitely manufactured, but still nowhere near

\$11 million dollars worth. **What gave** each of these **items** their **worth** was what **someone** was **willing** to **pay** for **them**. There was some attachment, often sentimental that caused the buyers to part with that much money...



[THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE WORTH]

So when we talk about worth, I'd like you to stop and think about something for a moment. **When God sent** His **Son** to die for us, what He was doing **definitively** in that moment was saying that **you**, as you sit here today have a **worth beyond value**. Why would **God** lovingly **fashion** and **form** you, and then send His **Son** to **die** for you, if you were **worthless** and **not worth knowing**?

[WORTH TO HIM / BUT ALSO TO OTHERS]

God knows what you are **worth**, not only to **Him**, but to **every person** whose life you become a part of.

If God ascribes this much worth to you, **how dare you devalue** what **He has created**? Amen?

[GOD CAN USE ANYONE / BIBLE]

And if you **doubt** that **God** can **use you** to **love**, **encourage** and **minister** to the people He has placed in your sphere of influence, then you've **lost sight** of **who** our **God** is. Our **Bible** is full of **encounters** where **seemingly insignificant people** are **empowered** by **God** to **change** the **course** of **history** and the **path** of **nations**.

So, can I ask you. What makes you think God cannot use you, when you are so incredibly valuable, so incredibly and intricately fashioned by Him and when He has promised to use you extravagantly to change people's lives.

[OUR NATURAL RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE]

Our **natural response to** the **love** that God has shown to us, should be to **love people** in a similar way...

[WE SEE THE VALUE IN EVERY PERSON]

It means we **see value** in each and **every person** around us, not because of their **social standing**, their financial status or the **colour** of their skin, but because God values them just as highly as He values you.

[1 JOHN SCRIPTURE / WHOEVER DOES NOT LOVE]

The Scripture from 1 John goes one step further and says: **“Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.”**

[HEART = LOVE GOD, BUT NOT PPL → CANNOT SEPARATE THE TWO]

So for those of us that have decided in our hearts: **“I will love God and I will do what He asks of me. But my faith is my business and will be lived out in**

private.” For those of us who find ourselves there, I just want to say today, **you cannot separate** your **love** for **God** from **life** with His **people**.

[WHY IS COMMUNITY SO IMPORTANT TO GOD]

But Why, **why** is it **so important** to **God** that we do life with other believers?

I mean, **have** you **met people**?

It’s important to Him for a few reasons.

[GOD IS RELATIONAL / SO ARE WE / COVID / COMM CAN BE COSTLY / BEST VERSION OF ME IN COMMUNITY / GAIN OUTWEIGHS ANY COST]



1. **God** is **relational**, and He **created** us in the **same way**. Take **people out of community** and **something ugly happens**. We **forget** who

we are, we forget who other people are. COVID has shown us this reality. For so many of us our world has become incredibly small since COVID hit. I remember what it was like when we were on full lockdown. There was almost a selfishness that was birthed in that season that needed to die as we came out of it. I found it difficult to come back into a rhythm of seeing people and doing Community because I had gotten comfortable not doing so. You see, the honest truth is, Community can be costly. Doing life with others is not always easy. It brings its challenges and requires me to live for someone other than myself. But honestly, I become the best version of myself when I live in Community and when I live to love others with the love of Christ. And what I gain in living out my purpose and loving others this way, vastly outweighs anything it has cost me.

[LET'S TALK COST]

But let's talk cost for a moment. Because sometimes, I feel like it's **disingenuous** to say the **benefit** far **outweighs** the **cost**, so just **ignore** the **cost**. And then when the **cost comes** we are **surprised** by it.



[SUZUKI STORY]

My wife and I bought a **car** a **couple** of **years ago** that was **WAAAAAAAY** underpriced. But we just thought – **WOW** – what **good fortune**. What a **blessing**! But over the next couple of years we have **replaced** virtually **every single part** on that **car**. Sometimes it's **important** not to **ignore** the **hidden costs**, but to **embrace them** so when they come, we can work through

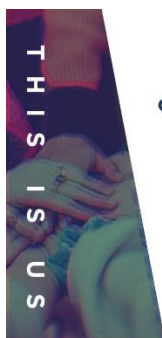
them.

[IN COMMUNITY WE WILL FIND... / BUT IT CAN BE MESSY / MAY STRUGGLE OR FAIL / HOLD ONTO OFFENCE OR DEAL WITH IT / NOTHING IN COMMUNITY WILL KEEP US FROM COMMUNITY]

While **Community** is a place in which we will find **Accountability, Authenticity**, in which we will find a **home**, and great **joy**! It will also be **messy**. We may at times find our **feelings hurt**. We may **struggle** as we all try to **care** and **love** for **each other** in the best way. And we will at times **fail each other**. And in that moment, we will have a choice. Will we **carry** our **offence** as an excuse and a badge to explain why we don't do Community. Or will we do what the Father calls us to do? **Bring** it **back** to the **Father** and back to the **Community**? **Once** the **enemy** knows that **nothing** that will **happen in Community** will ever be able to be **used** as an **excuse** to

step out of Community, he will have lost his power bring disunity.

[PAUL / ROMANS / DIVIDED CHURCH / ROM 12:9-18]



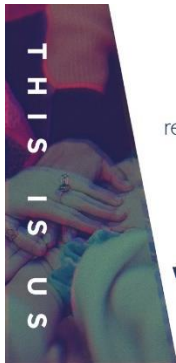
ROMANS 12:9-18 (CSB)

9 Love must be **sincere**. Hate what is evil; **cling to what is good**. 10 Be **devoted** to one another in love. **Honor** one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in **zeal**, but keep your **spiritual fervor, serving the Lord**. 12 Be **joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer**. 13 **Share** with the Lord's people **who are in need**. Practice **hospitality**.

As we read the letter to the **Romans, Paul** writes to the **divided Church** and they've let some **doctrinal issues divide** them, and Paul just urges them to **not allow anything to divide God's Church**, and he writes the following in Chapter 12, from verse 9:

9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share

with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.



ROMANS 12:9-18 (CSB)

14 **Bless** those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 **Rejoice** with those who rejoice; **mourn** with those who mourn. 16 **Live in harmony** with one another. **Do not be proud**, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[c] Do not be conceited. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do **what is right** in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, **live at peace** with everyone.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[c] Do not be conceited.

17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

[PICTURE OF COMMUNITY]

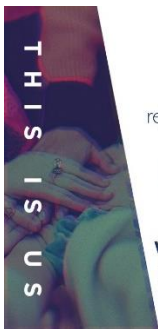
I love this picture that Paul paints, because it is exactly what Community is meant to be:



ROMANS 12:9-18 (CSB)

9 Love must be **sincere**. Hate what is evil; **cling to what is good**. 10 Be **devoted** to one another in love. **Honor** one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in **zeal**, but keep your **spiritual fervor, serving the Lord**. 12 Be **joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer**. 13 **Share** with the Lord's people **who are in need**. Practice **hospitality**.

- Sincere
- Clinging to what is Good
- Being devoted to one another
- Honoring one another
- Encouraging one another in our passionate pursuit of Jesus
- Serving together
- Finding joy together
- Bearing affliction together
- Faithfully praying together
- Sharing with one another
- Meeting each others needs
- Meeting in each others homes



ROMANS 12:9-18 (CSB)

14 **Bless** those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 **Rejoice** with those who rejoice; **mourn** with those who mourn. 16 **Live in harmony** with one another. **Do not be proud**, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[c] Do not be conceited. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do **what is right** in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, **live at peace** with everyone.

- Blessing each other when we have been wronged by a brother / sister
- Rejoicing together
- Mourning together
- People who would not normally be doing life together, loving each other. Looking past skin colour, status, background, nationality...
- Doing what is right
- Living at Peace with one another

That is Community friends.

[TWO MORE REASONS COMMUNITY MATTERS TO GOD]

There are two more reason's that Community matters to God:

[COMM BRINGS HIM GLORY / HOW CAN WE LIVE THIS WAY? / JESUS / RECONSIDER COMMUNITY]



2. **Community done well** brings Him **glory**.

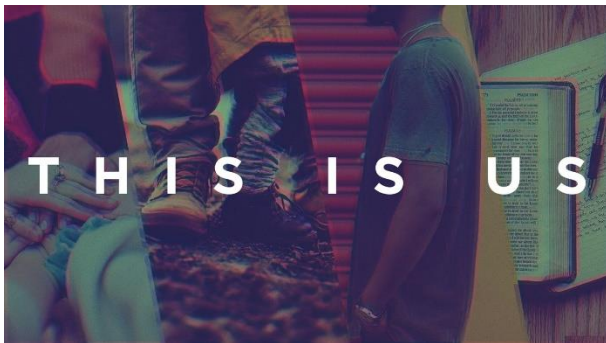
When we live in Community this way, **people see Jesus [Jody Story]**. Because it is **counterintuitive** to what we see in the **world** and to the way we see the world living. And when people see the **way we love each other** in this space, we can be **ready to answer** them. It is **ALL BECAUSE OF JESUS!** Because without Him I cannot live this way...

[BEING IN COMMUNITY PREPARES US FOR MISSION /
HEARTS AND MINDS PREPARED / HOW TO LOVE /
GIFTS AND HOW TO USE THEM / LEARN TO SERVE]



3. The **final reason** is because **being** in **Community** in this way **prepares** us to do what **God** has **purposed** the **Church** to **do**. To repeat what we do here, out there... The **Church** is God's

primary vehicle He uses to change the world. And this is the space in which our hearts and minds are prepared and sharpened. In which we learn what love for others truly means. In which we discover our gifts and learn to use them, and in which we learn to serve others. I didn't learn these things in my family friend, not at Varsity or in the Workplace. These are things God taught me in Community.



[MALCOLM]

I'd like to call up my good friend Malcolm who has prepared a short testimony on what Community has meant in his life and in the life of his family. Can we give him a round of applause?

MALCOLM TALKS

[PRAYER]

Let's pray...