

Called to Work Together with Others — January 27 & 28, 2018
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Ecclesiastes 4:7-12

- How does the author preface this section of his writings (7)? Why do you think he recorded his observations of “meaningless” things? What qualifies them as “wisdom literature”?
- Describe the man (8). What was his relational life like (8)? His financial life (8)? What rhetorical questions did the man ask himself (8)? Besides meaningless, how else does the author describe the man’s life (8)? If anyone you know is like this man – isolated and miserable – pray for a new life alongside others.
- The author then bestows the benefits of togetherness; summarize them (9-12). Which benefit speaks most to your heart? Why?
- Verses 9-12 are often read at wedding ceremonies, but they apply to all relationships, not just marriages. Bring to mind someone who needs the labor, help, warmth or protection of another – perhaps an overwhelmed new mom or a stressed co-worker. This week, show up. Join with them to help meet their needs.

Day Two: Mark 6:30-44

- Set the scene of this text (30-33). Although things seem very chaotic and not going as planned, how did Jesus respond to the large crowd (34)? How do you think you would’ve responded?
- What did the disciples think should happen, and why (35-36)? What did Jesus want them to do instead (37)? Jesus, our perfect model for living, shows us here that working with others is the best way. Take a moment to respond to the Lord. In what situations is he asking you to join together with him and do the work of God?
- How did the disciples respond to Jesus’ plan (37)? What happened next (38)? Summarize the story’s climax (39-44). Meditate on this miracle – one that may not have happened had the disciples refused to work with Jesus. Thank God that we get to do the work of miracles, especially that we can join together with him and others in order to do so.

Day Three: Acts 6:1-7

- Describe “those days” (1). What was the Hellenistic Jews’ grievance (1)? In an attempt to rectify the problem, what did the Twelve propose (2-4)? How good are you at delegating responsibilities? Ask the Lord whether delegation is needed for a current work or ministry situation. Pray for grace to do so, for an experience of the truth that “if you want to go far, go together.”
- How did the group respond to the Apostles’ proposal (5)? Describe those they chose to care for the widows (5). How were these men commissioned to do the work (6)? What are some opportunities for you to similarly empower people to do God’s work? Make a plan to do so, and put it into action this week.
- Describe the further increase of the community of believers (7). Imagine if the Apostles resisted delegation and instead tried to keep doing it all on their own. What might have been different about the growth pattern? What could this mean for you today?

Day Four: 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

- How does Paul put himself and Apollos in their rightful place (5)? What makes you “only a servant? And what is your “assigned task”? Consider whether you view others –

especially those in leadership – in this light: as servants assigned tasks from God. How might a clear view of this foster fruitful collaboration?

- Describe the roles Paul, Apollos and God play (6-7). It is God alone who makes things grow. Where is this true in your own life? Yet who did the planting and watering? Why do you think God so often wants to join together with us to do his work?
- Despite different callings and tasks, what unites followers of Christ (8)? What is Paul and Apollos' call (9)? In your community, what sense do you have of "one purpose"? To what degree do you think of other Jesus-followers as "co-workers"? God desires for each of us to have a deep sense of our common purpose; pray it would sink in for you and others.

Day Five: Colossians 4:7-18

- In Paul's final greetings of this letter, whom does he first describe (7-9)? What will Tychicus and Onesimus do (8-9)? Who in your life would you send as your representative or messenger in a situation like this? Why? Thank God for such co-workers.
- Describe all those who send greetings alongside Paul (10-14). Some instruct, some provide comfort, while others intercede in prayer. What picture does this paint of working with others unto the Lord? Where do you see yourself in this vision?
- What specific greetings and requests does Paul include (15-17)? Note the diversity of those he addresses. How diverse are the groups you work with? What is one way to foster more diversity? How does Paul conclude his letter (18)?
- If you were writing a letter like this, how many and what people in your life would you reference? Ask the Holy Spirit to energize you to seek and nurture rich experiences of working with others.