INFUSION#19

CONSISTENT COMMUNITY

Outreach Influence Team

Meeting Preparation

For the best experience of learning and transformation, please take some time to do the following three things:

Read: *Organic Disciples* (Chapters 19-21)

- Chapter 19- “God Needed Nothing, But He Invited Us to Be His Friends”
- Chapter 20- “Better Together: Why We > Me”
- Chapter 21- “The World Will Know We Are Christians by the Way We Love One Another… and Them”

Also, read pages 67-69 in *Organic Outreach for Churches*, and reflect on the Mind Shift from Believing to Belonging.

Pray: Thank God for modeling community in the Trinity and in how Jesus loved people when He walked on this earth. Pray that the way you will love the family of God, and the way you live in community, will show others the presence and love of Jesus.

Action: As you get ready for your Outreach Influence Team meeting, take time to look at your life over the past month. Where do you engage in Christian community? What do you receive from others, and what do they receive from you? How is your life stronger because you embrace Jesus’ example of living in consistent community?

Infusion Focus

In each infusion, based on the content of *Organic Disciples,* we focus on one marker of spiritual growth. We ask three questions: 1) How did Jesus model and teach this marker? 2) How should I follow the example of our Savior in this area of my spiritual life? 3) How should this lead me on mission with Jesus every day? Simply put, we will ***learn*** from Jesus, ***live*** like Jesus, and ***follow*** Jesus on mission.

In this infusion, we will look at what Jesus taught us about consistent community. Jesus models eternal community because He exists in perfect harmony with the Father and the Spirit. He also lived in close fellowship with His disciples, close friends (Mary, Martha, and Lazarus), the 70, and others. He called His people to love each other and reveal His presence and grace to the world through community. This will be our focus in this infusion.

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Opening Scripture and Prayer

Read: Matthew 4:18-22 (3 minutes)

Pray: Thank Jesus for calling you to "follow Him." Ask the Holy Spirit to help Christians live and walk in community that delights God, strengthens us, and shows the world that we are the people of God.



The One-Degree Rule: Four Minutes to Share It
(9 minutes)

In pairs, take time for each person to respond to two or three of the questions below. Each person should keep their sharing to around 4 minutes.

- On a scale of 1-10, where is your heart for lost people and your engagement with people who are far from Jesus? What can you do to increase your outreach temperature this week?
- What gets in the way of you spending more time in community with the family of God, and how can you be more intentional about living in rich Christian community?
- How might you invite the people in your life (who are not yet followers of Jesus) into places of Christian community where they can see the presence of Jesus revealed in the way we love one another?

My Infusion Strategy: Follow-up
(7 minutes)

Take time to have a couple of people respond to one of these questions:

- What did you do in the past month to infuse a vision for joyful generosity in the people you seek to infuse with the things you learn in last month's OIT?
- What are ways we can cheer on the people in our lives to increase in their generosity in a way that will become a witness to a selfish and needy world?

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Share: (9 Minutes)

- Tell about a faithful Christian you know who is deeply devoted to Christian community and also engaged in reaching people who are far from Jesus. How does their community with God's people strengthen their outreach to the lost?
- How can growing in consistent community with other believers cast a vision for non-believers of the joy and goodness of life as a Christian?



Learning Theme 1: Community Lessons from Jesus
(8 minutes)

Jesus was an amazing model of consistent and loving community. Just ponder these shocking realities about Jesus:

- Jesus, the Son of God, exists in eternal community with the Father and the Holy Spirit in trinitarian harmony.
- He called twelve men to follow Him and be trained to carry on His mission.
- Our Savior had an inner circle of three disciples who He trained at an even deeper level than the twelve (Peter, James, and John).
- The Lord had close friends like Mary, Martha, and Lazarus and spent time consistently in their home.
- Jesus, the holy Lamb of God, spent time with tax collectors, sinners, outcasts, and people rejected by the religious establishment.

Discuss:

- What do you learn about Jesus' love for people and commitment to community when you read the four Gospel accounts of His life?
- How should this example of Jesus shape our desire to be in community?

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Learning Theme 2: The Magnetic Power of Authentic Community (7 minutes)

Relationships are complex…no doubt! People are complicated…you bet! But when God joins hearts together, and community is sweet and filled with the presence of Jesus, it is like a spiritual magnet drawing hearts toward the family of God. In a broken, lonely, and fragmented world, the people of God have something to offer that is truly precious and priceless… the community every heart longs to experience.

Discuss:

- What are things happening in your church that would bring true blessing and life to lonely people in your community? How can you invite these people into your community?
- How could you invite someone into your home or circle of influence in a way that would model the goodness and value of healthy community?

BONUS: (6 minutes) The Mind Shift from ***Believing*** *to* ***Belonging***. If a church is going to model the grace of Jesus and draw people in who are still far from God, we need to allow them to come as they are. They need to know that they can belong and be part of the church family before they place faith in Jesus and become part of God's forever family. If we force people to believe before they feel welcome, many will leave and not get to hear the Good News and see the love of Jesus modeled through the lives of His people.

Discuss:

- How can inviting people into the fellowship of the church before they have faith in Jesus help them move closer to the Savior and move forward on their journey of faith?
- If we demand faith in Jesus before a person can feel they are part of a church community, how can this get in the way of their journey to Jesus?

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Discussion and Collaboration: (5 minutes)

- What are ways you can plan your worship services and church events so people feel welcomed and embraced even when they have not yet placed their faith in Jesus?
- What outreach event, ministry, or strategy are you engaging in (in your area of ministry) in the next three months, and how can others (OIT members) pray and support you?
- What is happening for outreach to the life of the whole church in the next six months, and how can the members of the OIT help this succeed? How can you all be praying for a powerful work of God through this outreach?

My Infusion Strategy: How will I infuse what I have learned about Consistent Community this month into my Level 4 Ministry Leaders and beyond? (4 minutes)

Identify:	**Write Down:**
Person/Group/Team	Infusion Strategy/Action

Closing Prayer: Pray together for... (3 minutes)

- Thank God that while you were still lost and sinful, He loved you and welcomed you to draw near Him.
- Ask that your church members' hearts would love and welcome people into your church community while they are still on a journey toward Jesus.

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Read: Matthew 4:18-22 (3 minutes)

Pray: Thank Jesus for calling you to "follow Him." Ask for the help of the Holy Spirit for Christians to live and walk in community that delights God, strengthens us, and shows the world that we are the people of God.



The One-Degree Rule: Two Minutes to Share It
(6 minutes)

Take time in pairs and have each person respond to one or two of the questions below. Each person should keep their sharing to just over 2 minutes.

- On a scale of 1-10 where is your heart for lost people and your engagement with people who are far from Jesus? What can you do to increase your outreach temperature this week?
- What gets in the way of you spending more time in community with the family of God and how can you be more intentional about living in rich Christian community?
- How might you invite the people in your life (who are not yet followers of Jesus) into places of Christian community where they can see the presence of Jesus revealed in the way we love one another?

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Share: (4 minutes)

- Tell about a faithful Christian you know who is deeply devoted to Christian community and also engaged in reaching people who are far from Jesus. How does their community with God's people strengthen their outreach to the lost?
- How can growing in consistent community with other believers cast a vision for non-believers of the joy and goodness of life as a Christian?



Learning Theme: The Magnetic Power of Authentic Community (9 minutes)

Relationships are complex…no doubt! People are complicated…you bet! But when God joins hearts together and community is sweet and filled with the presence of Jesus, it is like a spiritual magnet drawing hearts toward the family of God. In a broken, lonely, and fragmented world, the people of God have something to offer that is truly precious and priceless…the community that every heart longs to experience.

Discuss:

- What are things happening in your church that would bring true blessing and life to lonely people in your community? How can you invite these people into your community?
- How could you invite someone into your home or circle of influence in a way that would model the goodness and value of healthy community?

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Discussion and Collaboration (5 minutes)

- What are ways you can plan your worship services and church events so people feel welcomed and embraced even when they have not yet placed their faith in Jesus?
- What outreach event, ministry, or strategy are you engaging in (in your area of ministry) in the next three months and how can others (OIT members) pray and support you?
- What is happening for outreach the life of the whole church in the next six months and how can the members of the OIT help this succeed? How can you all be praying for a powerful work of God through this outreach?

Closing Prayer: Pray together for… (3 minutes)

- Thank God that while you were still lost and sinful, He loved you and welcomed you to draw near Him.
- Ask for the hearts of your church members to love and welcome people into your church community while they are still on a journey toward Jesus.

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Read: Matthew 4:18-22 (2 minutes)

Pray: Thank Jesus for calling you to "follow Him." Ask for the help of the Holy Spirit for Christians to live and walk in community that delights God, strengthens us, and shows the world that we are the people of God.



The One-Degree Rule: Personal Reflection (2 minutes)

A quiet moment and think about.

- On a scale of 1-10 where is your heart for lost people and your engagement with people who are far from Jesus? What can you do to increase your outreach temperature this week?
- How might you invite the people in your life (who are not yet followers of Jesus) into places of Christian community where they can see the presence of Jesus revealed in the way we love one another?



Share: (3 minutes)

- Tell about a faithful Christian you know who is deeply devoted to Christian community and also engaged in reaching people who are far from Jesus. How does their community with God's people strengthen their outreach to the lost?

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Learning Theme: The Magnetic Power of Authentic Community (5 minutes)

Relationships are complex…no doubt! People are complicated…you bet! But when God joins hearts together and community is sweet and filled with the presence of Jesus, it is like a spiritual magnet drawing hearts toward the family of God. In a broken, lonely, and fragmented world, the people of God have something to offer that is truly precious and priceless…the community that every heart longs to experience.

Discuss:

- What are things happening in your church that would bring true blessing and life to lonely people in your community? How can you invite these people into your community?



Discussion and Collaboration: (2 minutes)

- What are ways you can plan your worship services and church events so people feel welcomed and embraced even when they have not yet placed their faith in Jesus?

Closing Prayer: Pray together for… (1 minute)

- Thank God that while you were still lost and sinful, He loved you and welcomed you to draw near Him.

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