



## SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY # 4

# Value Statements with Creedal Statements and Study Questions

## Mutual Support - We walk together

The Body of Christ cares for one another through the sorrows and joys during each stage of life. Brothers and sisters in Christ recognize each other's differences, seek to understand more than to be understood, support collective decisions, and practice Christ-like love.

### CREEDAL STATEMENTS

- The Triune God designed our lives to be lived in relation to one another. (The Lord's Prayer as a mutual prayer)
- As the Forgiveness of Sins is the Key to Heaven (Office of the Keys) brothers and sisters grow in the practice of consideration, assertiveness, gentleness, honesty, confession and forgiveness with each other.
- Christian fellowship and healthy relationships are vital in our journey through generations towards paradise together.

### Opening Questions to get started

1. In the Lord's Prayer, why do you think Jesus teaches us to pray "OUR Father, who art in heaven" as opposed to "MY Father, who art in heaven?"
2. In your experience, how is two better than one?  
(two people together compared to one person alone)

### Watch Video

3. What are your thoughts or impressions from the video?
4. What do you think about the concept, since we are going to be spending eternity with one another, our Lord wants us to practice getting better and better at loving one another now?

### TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

<sup>9</sup>Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. <sup>10</sup>For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! <sup>11</sup>Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? <sup>12</sup>And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

God gave to Solomon great wisdom and wise people from all over the world came to Solomon to learn from him. Solomon also learned from them, further increasing his wisdom. Our Lord saw fit to have much of Solomon's wisdom written down for us in the book of Proverbs. In another of Solomon's books, Ecclesiastes, wise Solomon writes "two is better than one."

**5. What do you think about this passage "two are better than one" ?**

The story is told that an old Midwestern fair, many spectators gathered for an old-fashioned horse pull (an event where various weights are put on a horse-drawn sled and pulled along the ground.) The grand-champion horse pulled a sled with 4,500 pounds on it. The runner-up was close, with a 4,400 pound pull. Some of the men wondered what the two horses could pull of hitched together. Separately they totaled nearly 9,000 pounds, but when hitched and working together as a team, they pulled over 12,000 pounds.

How does this happen? How can the sum accomplishment of two people working together on a project be greater than the same two people's separate work added together? Some call it synergy.

**Synergy** = the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects.

**6. Can your group think of examples of synergy they have witnessed?**

Of course, even greater synergy is ever-more possible with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Notice the cord of three strands in Ecc. 4:12.** Who is the third? Of course it's the greater son of Solomon, our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One who promises to be with us always. He especially promises to be with us and grant us His powerful Spirit as we work together with other people in His Name. Like a cord of strands, He weaves His own love in and around and even through us.

**7. How is this truth of the Lord woven through us a comfort to us in our relationships?**

Two people working together can always accomplish more – **as long as they are working together.** When they are not working together, when they are working against one another, it's worse than being alone. Sometimes "against one another" happens with us, even between people we love the most.

**8. How do we handle it when we are against one another?**

**9. How does our Lord want us to handle it?**

See Going Deeper part A for further discussion of handling against one another.

## **HELP IS HELPED**

In a Grace Lutheran Winter Haven document titled “what it means to work at Grace Lutheran Church and School” the following bullet points are listed under the heading:

### **AT GRACE PARTICIPATION IS KEY AND HELP IS HELPED**

- ❖ We care about teaching and training people for works of service.
- ❖ We promote many roles of service.
- ❖ We let people serve, even if we can do it better.
  - We also help people serve.
- ❖ Volunteers are important. Thank them.
- ❖ We help each other.
- ❖ We ask for help, let others help and foster help, because two is better than one.

**10. What do you think about these bullet points?**

**11. What is the value of letting someone else do a task that you might could do better?**

## **DON'T GO ALONE Luke 10:1-23**

Jesus sent out the 72 in pairs. He saw value in 36 pairs of disciples doing the work of the Lord together rather than 72 going alone. Some might say the 72 could reach more people for the Lord. Others might say, yes but 36 can be more effective. Jesus doesn't tell us why the pairs but Luke is sure to record that it was in pairs.

**12. From the verses of Luke 10:1-23, why might Jesus have sent the pairs?**

Many use the phrase “Don't Go Alone” especially in regards to safety. Christians often use this phrase in a mentoring sense, as in, take someone with you and disciple them along the way.

**13. If you took up the ministry philosophy “Don't go alone” but “bring a friend along with you in your ministry task” what would this look like for you?**

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

**14. How does knowing that we will be spending eternity with God AND all His people add even more importance to you for the value of human relationships?**

**15. The early Christians called one another “brother” and “sister.” How do these terms for one another support the value of walking together?**

**16. Why should we let others help even if we can do it better?**

## Going Deeper

### Part A Matthew 18 (see text below)

When your brother wrongs you, how does Jesus instruct us to handle things in Matthew 18:15-17?

After hearing these instructions, Peter clearly understands that he is to forgive his brother who has wronged him. But one question remains on Peter's mind. What question does Peter ask Jesus? (see Matthew 18:21).

What is Jesus' answer? (see Matthew 18:22)

What parable does Jesus then tell to illustrate His answer? (Matthew 18:23-35).

How does Jesus say after this parable? (see Matthew 18:35)

"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Any questions?

<sup>15</sup> "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

<sup>21</sup> Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

<sup>23</sup> "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.<sup>Ⓜ</sup> <sup>24</sup> When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents....

<sup>32</sup> Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup> And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' <sup>34</sup> And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers,<sup>Ⓜ</sup> until he should pay all his debt. <sup>35</sup> So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

## **Part B. Romans 12**

After being filled up with God's grace in the opening chapters, many of the Epistles include exhortations in the later chapters to live out our Christians lives together. Examine the exhortations in Romans 12.

<sup>3</sup> For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. <sup>4</sup> For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup> We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your<sup>Ⓜ</sup> faith; <sup>7</sup> if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,<sup>Ⓜ</sup> do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

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

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

How does this passage of Romans recognize individual differences? (see v. 4,6)  
How does this passage instruct us to strive for unity? (see v.3,5,16)

This section of Scripture begins with God's grace, (verse 3) and reminds us God graciously gives us different gifts *according to our abilities*. (verse 6). How does remembering it's by God's grace that we have our gifts help curb our temptations to enviously compare?

Verse 16 views from comparisons from a different angle, not as in being jealous of what others have, but viewing yourself as "superior" because you have more than others "beneath you." How does remembering God's grace help curb our temptations of being conceited?

At this time in your life, what stands out to you from verse 12?  
*being joyful in hope? being patient in affliction? or being faithful in prayer?*

Anything else from this section of Scripture that the Lord is laying on your heart today?