



*With Us*  
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“Invitation into Community”  
December 3, 2023

**Key Verses:** Luke 1:39-45 (with Genesis 1:26; 2:18, 23-25; 3:8-10; John 1:1-5, 14)

**Key Thought:** Sin wrecks true community, but the coming of the Christ is God’s solution to restore it.

**Points to Consider:**

- “Advent” stems from a Latin word meaning “coming” and refers to the coming of the Christ. It is a season where Christians identify with the longing of the ancient Israelites for the Messiah, where we peer through our present darkness and perceive a Light at the end of the tunnel, and prepare ourselves for His coming.
  - i. We can identify with those who awaited the first coming of the “Christ” (i.e., the Messiah).
  - ii. We can long for the second coming of the Christ and the consummation of His kingdom.
  - iii. We can seek for the Christ to come anew into our lives today by means of the Holy Spirit.
- True community is God’s intention for humans, patterned after His own trinitarian nature (cf. Genesis 1:16; 2:18, 23-25). A few marks of true community:
  - i. 2:18: Helping
  - ii. 2:23, 25: Intimacy ← T.D. Jakes: “Into me see.”
  - iii. 2:24: Union
- Sin wrecks true community (cf. Genesis 3:8-10). ← Not only does sin wrong the other, it often causes the offender to also separate from the other.
- Overviewing God’s revelation in the Old Testament leading up to Jesus, we can observe a pattern of God seeking to redeem, and humans choosing to rebel.
- However, the coming of Jesus is God’s grand solution to redeem people and to restore true community (cf. John 1:1-5, 14).
- Luke 1:39-45: The account of Mary, with Jesus, and Elizabeth, with John, is a beautiful picture of true community—a “first-fruit” of the coming of Jesus.

**Discussion Prompts:**

- Take a moment to consider what relationships in your life need to be restored so that you can enjoy the depths of true community as God intends. → (Optional: Share with the group.)
- Related to yourself (not others), explore what tends to hinder you from true community.
- Consider the portrait of true community in Genesis 2:18, 23-25. Which of the marks of true community do you long to see most in those relationships which need to be restored?
- How can the coming of the Christ restore community wrecked by sin?
- Close with prayer for one another.