

# EXPRESSING GOODNESS THROUGH GENEROSITY

FLOURISHING IN EXILE

Week 3 | June 21 Sermon

## Community:

An excerpt from **Community is Messy** by Heather Zempel for you to discuss together. Is this true? How have you seen this play out in your lives? How can knowing this encourage you to “be real” in group?

Community is messy. It always has been and always will be. **Messy community is not the exception to the rule; it is the rule.** The good news is that mess, when engaged rightly, can be the very thing that brings what we most want in groups: **community and growth.**

**Proverbs 14:4** has become one of my organizing metaphors in regard to community, church, small groups or whatever circles of mess we find ourselves in: **“Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty, but from the strength of an ox come abundant harvests.”**

You can have a clean barn with no animals in it, but you aren’t going to get much done without animals. Likewise, you can have a tidy church as long as no one is in it, but **community requires that we show up. And showing up means bringing our messes.**

Perhaps answering the discussion questions is easy for you to do with your groupies by now. Or maybe not yet. Would you take a risk of sharing some “mess” as you answer authentically this week? This could be a good opportunity to pull out your **Life Cards** again if the visual representation was an effective tool for you. As a reminder, Life Cards can be picked up outside Jenny’s office or delivered upon request.

And! Do something nice for the dads in your GROUP this week or any dad that you know, whether that be a physical or spiritual father. Just bless their day in some kind way.

## Sermon Discussion Questions:

Teacher: Kevin Korver

In Ephesian 4:28-5:2, St. Paul gives reasons why work should matter to the believer. Work empowers us to:

*Do something purposeful | Provide for ourselves and our families | Have something to share with those in need*

Do you think about your work and generosity in these Biblical terms? If not, why not? Would your lifestyle change if these were your reasons for work? If so, how?

Do you agree/disagree with the following statement?

*Yahweh cared more about every poor person in Israel being able to provide for themselves through work than He did about any particular Israelite landowner’s “right” to maximize profits from their business/farm/enterprise.*

If you agree with this statement, why? And how would you apply the principle to our life in SE Iowa today?