

... our reliance, our respect and our admiration blossom into an Appreciative Love of a singularly robust and well-informed kind... In a perfect Friendship this Appreciative Love is, I think, often so great and so firmly based that each member of the circle feels, in his secret heart, humbled before all the rest. Sometimes he wonders what he is doing there among his betters. He is lucky beyond desert to be in such company. Especially when the whole group is together, each bringing out all that is best, wisest, or funniest in all the others. Those are the golden sessions; when four or five of us after a hard day's walking have come to our inn; when our slippers are on, our feet spread out towards the blaze and our drinks at our elbows; when the whole world, and something beyond the world, opens itself to our minds as we talk; and no one has any claim on or any responsibility for another, but all are freemen and equals as if we had first met an hour ago, while at the same time an Affection mellowed by the years enfolds us. Life—natural life—has no better gift to give. Who could have deserved it? – C.S. Lewis

Half of this devo is a quote due to the rich value articulated above. This community (with unity) occurs with several ingredients – time, commitment, a willingness to grow, like-mindedness in trajectory, and the list could continue. This is core level relational depth Lewis articulates. It comes with a willingness to be vulnerable, consistent, and exercise additional spiritual disciplines, expressed humility, actionable service, active listening, rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn. Unity amidst diversity.

As we continue in our week of Community, men – do you have a man with whom you are open, vulnerable, can be challenged? Women, is there a Godly sister-in-Christ with whom you are growing? If so, praise God! Grace poured out through a person. If not, pray to be that person and in turn for Him to reveal like-minded individual(s).

As God guides and blesses you with community at each level of relational depth, would you lean in to the opportunity to seek and receive grace at each level? Would you lean in to the opportunity for His grace to flow through you to another?

Pray: *LORD, would you help me to be(come) a person of love through the friend I am to those around me? Would you guide and grow me in mutually edifying community for Your glory.*

Exercise it Out: If the Lewis quote above strikes a chord and God has blessed you with those friendships – write a card, make a call, express gratitude to God for His blessing through another.

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