

Collab

**PARTNERING WITH PURPOSE
AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

WEDNESDAYS STARTING JAN 11

5:45PM DINNER | 7PM TEACHING & DISCUSSION

RELATING

MINISTRY

INDIVIDUALS

MARRIAGE

COMMUNITY

CONFLICT

Collab:

two or more people partnering together as a team to accomplish an agenda great than their own and a goal greater than their own.

If a collab is a team trying to accomplish something together...

what teams are you on?



Identify and discuss the teams you're on and your collaborations with those sitting near you.



Open up your Bible or Bible app on your phone.

Collaboration:

1. Is part of God's nature and character:

Genesis 1:1-2, John 1:1-3

God is a 3-in-1 God. From His very first act in recorded history, we see that the three persons of the Trinity are collaborating in creation. God is a collaborating God in action and nature.

2. Is embedded in God's design for humanity:

Genesis 1:26-27, 2:18-23

God creates humanity in his image in a special way that draws Adam into a process of understanding that his life is not meant to be lived individualistically.



If collabs are part of who God is and embedded in us as human beings, why are there so many challenges when we collaborate as a team?

(circle or write in the collab where you're feeling the most tension right now)



friendships

marriage

neighbors

politics

multi-cultural

dating

church

parenting

work teams

generations

other: _____

Challenges to Collabs:

1. INNATE INDEPENDENCE

(aka I don't really need you, because _____).

Genesis 3:11-12, Jeremiah 17:9

Since the fall in the garden of Eden, we have shifted from our design of interdependence (collabing) to independence. This shows up in obvious ways:

- I can do this on my own, so I don't really need you.
- You're slowing me down, so I don't really need you.
- You (or your people) don't really get it, (Generationally, Racially, Church Teams, Politically, Marritally) so I don't really need you.

But it also shows up in less obvious ways:

- Doing ministry with a self-centered focus, adding a religious coating to our efforts that makes it almost impossible to penetrate. In the name of "God has told me", we can launch out in extreme forms of independence that leaves no room for the humility of working within the body of Christ. Add "God" into the bullet points above: "I can do this FOR GOD on my own, so I don't need you."



2. INBORN SELF-GLORYING

(aka I am the most important, because _____).

Philippians 3:4-6

This is the flip side of independence. If I am independent, then I must prove my worth (self-righteousness). But we often cover over this with a "spiritual layer":

- This is my gifting and my calling.
- This is where I'm supposed to shine.
- This is where others need to learn to be servants of God (for me).

We can see this more clearly in others than we can ourselves. If we aren't willing to address our own idolatry, it can lead to fall-out in a collab or even the collapse of a team.

Challenges to Collabs:

3. CULTURAL TRENDS:

-Consumerism - we have been shaped by expecting that most/all our preferences be met, and not having to give time, energy, or money to something that doesn't "fit" me.

(Citizens vs Consumers. What amenities do you offer?)

-Intuitional Spirituality - this feels right to me. This doesn't feel right to me. More and more our cultural is "unbundling" spirituality. I like this part, but don't like that part. This creates a "religious hybrid" mentality where people's greatest commitment is to themselves, rather than something greater than themselves. (see *Strange Rites: New Religions For a Godless World*, by Tara Isabella Burton).

-Tribalism - this is a way of viewing the world that locates evil *primarily* in other people and groups (rather than in yourself) and is more committed to a groups' ideology/narrative than the truth. This leads to less cultural discussion and persuasion. In its place, we try to win arguments (rather than people) and slam dunk on the other tribe. (see *Truth Over Tribe: Pledging Allegiance to the Lamb, not the Donkey or the Elephant*, by Patrick Miller and Keith Simon).

-Self-Expression - our culture sees this as *the highest good*. Expressing ourselves and being ourselves is a good thing, but not the highest good. Jesus puts much more emphasis on self-sacrifice as the highest good. In fact, Jesus talks about self-sacrifice as the highest form of self-expression. *Matthew 16:24-26, Mark 10:44-45*



Which of the "challenges to collabs" do you find convicting?

Collaboration is God's Plan



Can you name anyone in the Bible who accomplished something on their own? Without collaborating?

Let's think through some Scripture:

Matthew 1 - The family God uses to bring the Messiah into the world is a collaboration of so many people over so many centuries.

Matthew 4:18-22 - Jesus begins his ministry by bringing others onto His team. All of Jesus' ministry is done within the context of a team (the disciples) even though they are slow to learn and understand.

Acts 2 and 4 - The birth of the church and the ministry of the church is a team expression.

Acts 13:4-5, 2 Timothy 4:9-12, 2 Corinthians 2:12-13 - Paul's church planting ministry was in the context of a team.

Acts 16:11-40 - The church in Philippi is started with the conversion of a high-powered female entrepreneur, a working class security guard, and an impoverished slave girl. This is a very strange team that God is committed to growing together (Phil. 1:6)

Our Thinking Needs Renewal So We Think "Collab"

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Teamwork and collaboration is part of God's character and framework.

We need to be reminded of this so we:

- keep individual expression in its proper place (Romans 12:5).
- do God's work with consideration for the rest of the body.
- don't forsake God's people, thinking we can be a Christian on our own.
- rest in God's commitment to work through collabs.



**What's your take-away from tonight?
Share with someone sitting next to you.**



For Self-Reflection at Home:

1. Reflect on this statement:

God is committed to fulfilling the work of his kingdom through the church, ministering together in collaborations that express a graciously and Sovereignly distributed diversity of gifts. The power for team ministry is rooted in believing the Gospel together, building the ministry out of prayer, and reflecting the nature of the Trinity in our collaborative partnerships.

What sticks out to you from this statement?

2. How tribal are you? Take the truth over tribe quiz to find out:

<https://choosetruthovertribe.com/book/quiz>



"Most of us are hardwired for tribalism.

Are you more liberal? Conservative?

Maybe you're moderate?

No matter what, all sides are guilty of elevating their tribe above the truth Jesus provides."

3. Are you feeling any tension about what we discussed? Where?



Course Schedule:

Wednesdays:

5:45-6:45pm - Dinner Served

7-8pm - Teaching and Discussion

Module 1:

Jan 11 - Intro to Collab

Explore the Biblical foundations for collaboration as part of the very character of God.

Jan 18 - Successful Collabs

How do we define success as we work together?

Jan 25 - Powerful Collabs

What is the driving engine for us as we partner together?

Feb 1 - No Class

Module 2:

Feb 8 - Collabs & Power

Power is a buzz words in our culture. Authority has often been abused. Is all power bad?

Feb 15 - Collabs & Conflict

We are all different, so disagreement is inevitable. How do we deal with it?

Feb 22 - To Be Announced

March 1st - No Class