

LIFE TOGETHER

Group Discussion Questions
Session Three– June 19, 2022

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Danbury, CT

For discussion today, we shall divide into groups of four or five. Try to gather with people you don't know very well, and spend a few moments in introduction. Then deal with the following discussion starters in response to Chapter IV, "Ministry":

1. In the Christian community, what is the difference between positive leadership and unhealthy domination?
2. What is "self-justification" as Bonhoeffer uses the term? Have there been times when you have engaged in self-justification? How can this be a problem/challenge even for the Christian?
3. How might carelessness with the tongue breed the spirit of hatred within a congregation? (Note the passages quoted on p. 92). How might such verbal carelessness militate against the notion of "the image of God?"
4. Comment on the apparent tension found in two statements on page 94:
 - a. A community which allows unemployed members to exist within it will perish because of them

and
 - b. The elimination of the weak is the death of fellowship.
5. Might regarding oneself as "chief of sinners" be feigned humility? Why or why not?
6. Relate a vignette about a Christian you've known personally who's a great listener. How were you served by him or her?
7. Do you believe there's a "highest ministry among the ministries?" Explain.
8. Why are fellow members of the same congregation frequently timid about providing the ministry of the Word to one another? How is Immanuel doing in this regard? Is there the right amount of "God-talk?"
9. What's the difference between pastoral authority and ecclesiastical power?