

*SMALL GROUP
RE-FOCUS*

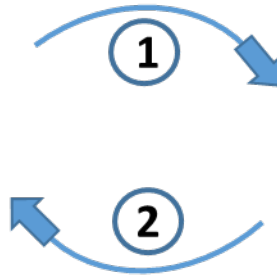
SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

The Big Picture

Small Groups



- Growth
- Prayer
- Fellowship
- Accountability
- Care
- Work/serve



1

Move toward the Messes

2

Attract the Messes to us

CORPORATE	PRIVATE
Missions	@ Job etc.
Outreach	Get hands dirty
Com. Projects	Following/Decis.

COPORATE	PRIVATE
Serv. Format	Invest/Invite
Programs	Presentation
Events	

CHURCH MISSION

- Church Mission – “Loving God, Living Jesus, Learning to Serve”
- Ultimately we want to Grow in our Relationship with Christ
 - Become fully devoted “FOLLOWERS”
 - Small Groups help us “GROW”
- 5 “G’s”:
 1. **GRACE**: A personal appropriation of the Grace of God.
 2. **GROWTH**: Becoming more Christ Like.
 3. **GROUP**: Connecting with others in Significant – Supporting Relationships.
 4. **GIFTS**: Serving Christ’s Body according to my Spiritual Giftedness & Passion.
 5. **GOOD STEWARDSHIP**: Honoring God with our Resources.

Big Church – Small Church

- **The Cross:**
 - **Vertical**
 - Personal – Our relationship with God
 - Corporate – Big Church (Corp Worship)
 - **Horizontal**
 - Personal – Relationships with One another
 - Corporate – Small Church (Small Groups)



SOME PEOPLE NEVER CHANGE

- Have you known or do you know;
 1. People who have been Christians a long time, yet have significant areas of their life that they never change in (grow or mature)?
 2. A Person who knows the Bible better than most yet people can't stand to be around them?
 3. People who despite saying they love God are the meanest, cruelest, full of hatred people & have been that way for years?
 4. People who despite professing a hope in Christ, see little chance of hope in anything or anyone else – In fact, they are just plain negative?
- I believe these are folks who attend church, do the disciplines, maybe even read their Bible – But don't do what the Bible Says - & don't **grow/mature in CHRIST!**

HOW WE GROW

- **Ephesians 4:16**

- From Him (Christ)
- The whole body (us)
- Fitly joined together (each part does its work)
- Grows
- Builds itself up in love

- **We grow through the body (Church) doing it's work**

- People helping/encouraging/exhorting/caring for People

- **Small Groups are not just an add-on extra**

- They have a major role in the church's spiritual & natural growth
- Must be a major part of the structure & organization of the church

DISCIPLESHIP: An apprenticeship – Living as Christ would live if he were in my place.

1. **GRACE:** Christ's followers understand that they have individually recd. Christ's saving Grace & have abandoned all attempts to earn God's favor through their own efforts/accomplishments.
2. **GROWTH:** Christ's followers understand that the saving work is only the beginning of His work. They actively respond by pursuing a lifelong process of spiritual growth and maturity.
3. **GROUP:** Christ's followers honor God's call to engage in a community in order to grow in Christlikeness, express & receive love, and carry out the ministry of the church. Priority is given to corporate gatherings for worship, teaching, & participation in the ordinances ----Also, connecting relationally to a small group for mutual encouragement, support, & accountability.
4. **GIFTS:** Christ's followers recognize that the church is comprised of members uniquely gifted by the HS for the purpose of building up the body & furthering the ministry of the Church.
5. **GOOD STEWARSHIP:** Christ's followers realize that they have been bought with a price & that everything they are & have belongs to him. Thus, seeking to be responsible caretakers of resources entrusted to them.

SMALL GROUP RE-FOCUS

- Started in 2014 – Initial focus was for relationship building
- Need to re-focus toward “Spiritual Aspects” – Shift to “Small Church”
- **Small Group Mission** – “Connect people into groups that come together to help one another grow in their relationship with Christ”.

CORE VALUES

1. MANDATE: SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

- Jesus intends for his followers to be like him.
- Our goal should be to become more Christ-like
 - By Following Jesus – “LIVING JESUS”

2. MEANS: SMALL GROUPS

- Develop Significant/Connecting relationships – Accountability – Belonging – Caring.
- Without this type of “connection” people are attending not “doing Church”
- A small group who loves one another with God’s Love will experience the Life God promised – A Goal of Spiritual Maturity.

CORE VALUES

3. MOBILIZE: DEVELOPING LEADERS

- Small Group Leaders are vital to the group & Church's Growth.
- Work together with other Group Leaders & Pastor – Deacons.
- Answer to “Replace Ourselves”

4. MULTIPLY: SPAN OF CARE

- Groups should expand and multiply
- Desire to get other people “connected”
- The overall # of groups should increase – “Missionary Baptist Model”

5. MEANS: SEEK & CELEBRATE

- Effective ministry happens in atmosphere of prayer & celebration
 - Prayer should be a vital part of groups
 - Create a climate of fun & festivity.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A GOOD GROUP (1)?

- **A Second family** – Psalm 68:6 –
 - Humility, to learn, grow & start over – Learning to receive grace & Love
- **A Connection** – 2 Cor 6:13
 - Opening your hearts to God, growth, & each other.
 - Experience of being attached, loved & belonging.
- **Discipline & Structure** – Prov 15:32
 - Necessary to protect the time, process, & members.
 - Out of control rude behavior must be dealt with
 - Discipline in Love – The language used is vital
- **Prayer** – Matt 18:20
 - SG's most powerful tool for growth
 - Prayer requests, dedicated time, pray about the group, Doesn't have to be only about illness & natural disasters.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A GOOD GROUP (2)?

- **Accountability** – (James confess to one another, healed)
 - Simply means to be “answerable”. In other words, group members are “answerable” or accountable to each other.
 - Bring struggles, failures, successes – Involves the whole person.
 - Person has a temptation with _____ brings it to the group & makes him/her self answerable to the group for this. Discuss what drives the temptation, internal lacks or inability, stresses etc. EVERYONE LEARNS.
- **Forgiveness** –
 - Grace & Forgiveness must be the foundation from which healing & growth come.
 - For our weakness, inability & failures – True Unmerited Favor.
- **Support & Strengthening** – (2 Cor 12:10)
 - Listening, validating, encouraging,
 - Offering support & help

WHAT HAPPENS IN A GOOD GROUP (3)?

- **Mentoring & Modeling** –
 - Happens naturally, parenting, marriage, career, problems etc.
 - Doesn't mean perfection
- **Grieving** – Matt 5:4
 - Loss happens, help members work through it.
- **Healing** –
 - From issues that are brought up, problems we face etc. This is the end result
 - After healing, there is growth.
- **Confrontation** –EPH 4:15
 - While showing grace & love – the group must also speak to the hurtfulness of sin – (BALANCE Grace-Truth).
 - Sessions are not separate – Grace & Truth must be balanced at the right time.

SMALL GROUP PARTICULARS

- Establish a Leader(s) – Prefer it not be existing Preacher/Deacon (Support)
 - Leader is really a Facilitator –NOT A TEACHER!
- Should meet at least one other time per month (other than Sched. Sunday)
- Leader/Facilitator Training & Meetings will be provided.
- Social/Recreational Aspect should still be a part (See Acts Chapt 2).
- **Focus areas:**
 - Prayer Requests & Prayer
 - Message Question Discussions
 - Mutual Care
 - Fellowship
 - Support & Accountability

SMALL GROUP GROUNDRULES

- Fewer rules are better –but:

- Make the commitment
- Show up on time
- Get involved
- Respect each others time
- Respect each **others feelings**
- Don't interrupt someone who is speaking
- Stay on task during discussion time
- Remember to **balance Grace & Truth**

- Future Considerations:

- **Small Group as main organizational structure of the church?**