

Community: Living Life Together

What to love about Small Groups:

1) Purpose-filled Relationships.

a) We have two kinds of Groups that Gather at CLC.

- i) C – Groups = Community (Common – unity). The vision we have for these groups is simple. Effective and life changing ministry happens when we connect with God and people by living life better through biblical relationships.
- ii) D – Groups = Discipleship Groups (Journey Discipleship Experience). It is a 1 year experience with a systematic video curriculum and a Discipleship Coach.

b) The genius of Christianity is a shared life.

- i) Charles Spurgeon, a 19th century British megachurch pastor, wrote: “Communion is strength; solitude is weakness. Alone, the fine old beech (tree) yields to the blast (of wind) and lies prone in the meadow. In the forest, supporting each other, the trees laugh at the hurricane. The sheep of Jesus flock together. The social element is the genius of Christianity.”
- ii) 1 Thessalonians 2:8 NIV84 We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.
 - (1) It was Paul’s willingness to share life with them that made his message so meaningful.
- iii) Jesus not only ministered in the synagogue but he also ministered while eating a meal, walking down a road, crossing the lake in a fishing boat with his friends.
- iv) Genuine ministry is about God’s purpose manifesting in the midst of a routine of the average everyday life.
 - (1) Understanding the comfort and satisfaction people get from hobbies and interest is the key to reaching people who need God.
 - (2) Ministry to some people in our city will not begin with a Sunday morning sermon in a church building, it might begin with a pick-up game of basketball in the gym, or dog-training group that meets in the park.

- c) Jesus lived with his disciples in the routines of life.
 - i) He trained them by talking about things they could relate too.
 - ii) Jesus talked about gardening, fishing, shepherds and sheep. He told stories about fathers and sons, weddings, and pearls of great price.
 - iii) He never abandoned his Purpose, but he related to them in their everyday life.

2) Life Change Happens Best in the Context of Relationships.

- a) Jesus knew this.
 - i) Jesus preached to the crowds, but he discipled the 12.
- b) When Jesus was arrested the crowds turned on him and mocked him. It was his small group that hung in there through what they considered the difficult tragedy of his death.

Even though Peter denied him in fear for his life. Jesus had invested so much one on one time with him, he was restored and released into his dynamic calling.

- c) The Early Church knew this.
 - i) Acts 2:42-47
- d) The Holy Spirit Knows this.
 - i) The unseen element Matt. 18:20

3) Powerful Things Happen Through Purposeful Relationships

Why Should I Join a CLC Small Group?

A – It is a place to be Activated.

One of the goals of a C-Group and our JDE is the mission aspect. We want each group to declare a mission. To serve together with a Kingdom Project. Get active!

B – It's a place to be Belong.

C – It's a place to be Cultivated.

The new life in us is like a seed planted in the ground that must be cultivated. And God uses others in our life to help us grow. Paul told the Corinthians, "I planted, Apollos watered, and God gave the increase." (1Cor. 3:6)

D – It's a place where Discipleship happens.

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...

There are nations within a nation. Groups of people who are united by ethnicities and interest.

We are all called to disciple them by (v.20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. Discipl-ing by sharing and showing them what Jesus has done in you.

E – It's a great place for Evangelism.

Good ministry starts where you are.

Here is what we have learned in over the years: People connect most naturally with others who are like them. Common interest, ideas, studies, practices, hardships... these make for the best framework for relational – connectivity and evangelism.

Evangelism and all good ministry starts where you are.