

## The Weakest Link: Pt 4: Gathering In A Group

**Intro:** Pastors Planning Sermon Series: Changed:

Wondering...Right thing? God stopping me, Spiritual Opposition...Pastors: The Journey: Walking W/Jesus Becoming like Him

**Phone Call: Your Verse for the day:** *"He leads me in paths of righteousness for His names sake!"*

**Talk About: Understanding the benefit of a small group in your life!**

**Continue Series: The Weakest Link: 6 Goals For Every Member**

**Our spiritual life is like a chain, with different disciplines or activities forming the links. If there is a weakness somewhere....**

**1<sup>st</sup> Worshipping Weekly 2<sup>nd</sup> Week Maturing Measurably 3<sup>rd</sup> Giving Generously Today Gathering In a Small Group**

**3 Things I want You to Go Away With: Relationships: Reality: Recognition**

**SMALL GROUPS ARE ALL ABOUT DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS THAT HELP US GROW**

### 5 Benefits of Gathering in A Small Group

## 1. GSG Gives You a Safe Place to Belong...a Place To Know and Be Known!

**Ge 2:18** *"The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone."*

We think of this as a marriage passage...really a statement about humanity!

We were created for community

**ILLUS:** As Independent as our culture is...Every man an Island...Even they get it!

*Video: About a bar...Cant do that in church...Figured...Different performer...Check this out*

A couple of years ago Dr Bill Williams shared with me about 4 Different Levels of Communication

Level 1:	Share non-personal facts (Weather etc)	10 min	
Level2:	Other People and Events (How about those Cowboys!)	10 min	30 mins..no connection
Level 3:	Facts about self, Sales, wife 2 kids	10 min	
Level 4:	Share Personal feelings about something/someone, what is going on in your life		

You can come to church, sit in the service for months...never really connect heart to heart with someone...

That is what being a part of a small group does for you!

## 2. GSG Gives You The BEST Environment To Grow Into What God Wants You To Be.

**Who was the most influential person of all time in leading people to know and follow God?**

**Jesus: How did he do it? Small Group! 12 men**

**Mt 4:19** *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."*

The Ultimate small group was the one Jesus formed with the 12 disciples. Look at the way they interacted

- **Lead People to God:** Nicodemus, Zacchaeus, Woman At Well...Over and Over
- **Mentoring: 2x2 Modeling: Touch the untouchable Loving: Zacchaeus Doing Life together**
- **Sacrifice/Serving Others:** Didn't just preach a sermon...Looked for a teachable moment in small group

Last time on this earth with them...Put them in small group...Taught them by modeling!

More life change is CAUGHT than TAUGHT!

If the most spiritually influential man that ever lived created a small group...and taught people how to love God in it...We should too!

## 3. GSG Provides Support We All Need During The Difficult Times Of Life.

**Mt 26:37-38** *"He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."*

God allows it to rain on the just and the unjust...Even Jesus needed someone...

**It is his darkest hour...stay with me!**

- Loss
- Failure
- Circumstances
- Struggles

Joy is doubled when it is shared...Sorrow is halved!

We all need someone to come along side us at times...tell us its going to be ok, we can make it...

**Illus:** Bible College Dallas Texas Trustee's because I was a painter...Boyce Mixon

#### **4. GSG Gives You a Safe Place for Spiritual Accountability..**

**Eph 4:15** *“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.”*

Growth comes about when we have someone in our life that can tell us the hard things...in a soft way

We all have areas in our life that we need to grow, to improve, to get better, to change, to repent

People tend to function in one of two ways

- Avoid the conversation completely
- Pound you with the truth

What we NEED...Is the truth...shared in a loving constructive way, that doesn't put us on defensive....But comes from love

There are very few places we can hear that...Church should be one of them...Cant do it here...group of people that love me..

Encourage me...want the best for me...

**ILLUS:** Staff training this week: Did it here...Because Bill wanted me to hear someone that I didn't really want to hear...

Bill valued it highly, tremendous help...Knew it would help the staff....Said...You dodged last one..be here this time?

Because he sees some areas I can improve. I can get mad, dodge it again...Or, I can listen to someone loves me...Go

#### **5. GSG Gives You Someone To Enjoy The Journey With!**

**Ro 12:15** *“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”*

When something wonderful happens...first thing you want to do? Share it

Joy is multiplied when it is shared!

**ILLUS:** Something wonderful happens in church...know what I do?

Call my wife...Share it with her...Then I call the Pastors

I call the Pastors...not because we have a professional relationship...But because they are the closest to me...

Great story...Share it with them..spiritual victory...Someone comes to know Jesus....

Broadcast it...because we all need to know we aren't alone in this thing!

**ILLUS:** Have you ever had an incredible event take place...and you cant reach anyone to tell them? Lessens it...

**Small Groups are all about Relationships...The encourage, empower, help us grow.**

#### **THE REALITY OF WHERE OUR SMALL GROUP MINISTRY IS TODAY**

- **Reality:** **Incredible Start: (Move to new building, Change of Leadership, Failure to do what**
- **Refocus:** **Keiths #1 Job...Get us back on track!**
- **Recommit** **This really is something we believe in...Committed to the process and importance**  
**Path: Worship                      Gather                      Serve                      Share**
- **Reform:** **Some are doing well...Some are struggling....Some Stopped meeting**  
**Communication Card: (Connection)**
  - a. I am ready for Small Group**
  - b. I am ready to reform (Run our course, not doing well, just want freshness!)**
  - c. I am ready to consider leading**

#### **A TRUTH WE HAVE COME TO REALIZE**

Some of you would not put you name on that card to join a small group if I taped a 1000 dollar bill to it!

We **RECOGNIZE** the intimidation factor of saying...Come join a group of people and share your heart...

Recommit to Small groups

Give you a step along the way...

Launch Some Community Groups...Little less scary

A Community Group is a mid sized group of people in similar stages of life that meets to help people connect with God, the church and one another.

- Safe Size
- Safe Place
- Safe Structure
- Safe Depth

Young Adults

Young Married

Married

**CONCLUSION:** Take your CC...While the band comes...think about it...if you are ready...take a plunge...

Maybe you have been here for months...and you haven't connected yet...enjoy it...getting closer to God...Not ready..

Community Group

Maybe you are ready for small group...Need to Reform, Reconnect etc

