Intro: Monday night, small group, discipleship: Meets in conference room, slammed, so I went to eat…back to work! 9:30 or so…group stops to say bye…“Go home…” No, I have WORK to do… All razzing me, giving me grief One of my small group members says, “Pastor, I think you are living in an upside down world!” Computer off!

In the Middle of our Series on Living Up In A Down World, and we are focused on the Church Part: Getting it Right Today I want to talk with you about the second part of Church that we believe is absolutely essential at RTBC Gathering in A Group: We believe two things:

1. Absolutely biblical: (Jesus had a small group! The 12)
2. Absolutely essential: (I don’t believe ANY of us can grow into the kind of Christians we all want to be. W/O We NEED to be in a small group! 3 things happen in a small group that don’t happen anywhere else in Christian life

**3 Benefits of Small Group**

1 Cor 12:12-27 Pg 813

1. **Groups Offer Us A Place Of Authentic Spiritual Connection.** 1 Cor 12:12-20
   - We are part of the body of Christ  (Don’t always FEEL that way in Church!) Come, Listen, Leave
     Church is MORE! So much more…and a LOT of that more is found in a small Group (Content, Care, Connection)
   - Not just physical connection, or emotional connection, or relational connection
   - There is a true SPIRITUAL CONNECTION Vs 13
     ~We were all given the same Spirit to drink
     ~We were all “baptized” by one Spirit into one body
     (Explain: Water vs Spirit baptism)
     Titus 3:5-6 Rom 8:9
   - Though we are different we all belong Vs 14-20
     ~We all belong 15-16 integrally connected (of) form completing part
     ~We all are placed by God! 18 God knows what we need…others need!

Illus: We can have that in here…in large worship service, but it isn’t the same….at all
Jesus shows us that the last couple of days on Earth (Upper Room Luke 22:15)

When you find the right group, you find a place and a people where you are spiritually connected
Why? Because in a group you find kindred spirits.
When you find a connection where you are spiritually linked, it is amazing! (Say hard things…OK!)

2. **Groups Give Us A Place To Care and Be Cared For By Others.** 1 Cor 12:21-26
   - Need: Everyone Is Needed To be necessary; to offer what is required or useful (Mic Button!, Lights)
   - Value: Everyone is important Listeners for AWANA, Teachers for Kidz Central, VBS Video!
     ~weak w/o strength, w/o health, w/o ability
     ~honorable to be despised; looked down upon; dishonored
     ~Unpresentable Inelegant; Shapeless: Unheard of in Greek and Roman world
   - Care: Everyone is cared for: Concern To be anxious about, or to be thoughtful of
     Illus: Cherished Members: Ladies prepared food, served food, cleaned up…Amazing Blessing to family
     Hadn’t been able to attend for 3 yrs or more; Visited, Prayed, Read, It’s hard for me to know if you aren’t here…Not in a group….shows up!
   - Connection: Everyone shares Suffers; Honored; Rejoices

Illus: Do you have someone in your life that truly “cares” for you?
Anxious for your wellbeing, Notices if you are here or not? , Calles, reaches out
Small Groups do that for one another: PRAY for; Comfort; Encourage, Challenge, Walk with I NEEDED someone to tell me, “Hey…you aren’t practicing what you preach!” Wasn’t ugly…Care!
Past week, with 2 funerals, I saw the true care going out from the body: I received the thankful emails, calls, cards

3. **Groups Give Us A Place To Contribute To Others Spiritually.** 1 Cor 12:27-31
   - One Body Church, body of Christ
   - Many Parts People…you and I
   - God has “appointed” you to a place! Lit = to place in the exact right position!
     ~Here, hard to contribute, But in Small Group…Fantastic!
     ~You can hear and be heard, care and be cared for, Serve and Be Served
   - You have something Unique and Indispensable to contribute to the Body.
     ~Everyone has a different gift
     ~God chooses what you have
     ~No one is uniquely configured like you! (If you are here, then God has you HERE for a reason)
     ~No one else brings to the table what YOU bring…and if you don’t bring it…WE MISS IT! HURTS!
Illus: I talk with people all the time who feel differently.
~ I don’t have a gift: Someone is confused…you or God!
~ I don’t have anything thing to offer God doesn’t make any Junk (Dick Drehmer)
~ I’m too young in my faith: Best lessons I ever learned on Communion (Safey net)
~ I’m too busy: Everyone has the same 24 hours!

Listen, none of those things are true!
REMEMBER THIS…When Jesus faced the MOST DIFFICULT times of His earthly
He wanted to BE WITH His Group….He NEEDED to be with His group....
Luke: Upper Room in fellowship
Matt Garden in prayer

CONCL:
Find a group!
They are all different, and mix different elements of essential ingredients
Content, Care, Service, Prayer,
  • Content (ABS: Other stuff; Wed Nite w me)
  • Care: (Men’s; Women’s,
  • Service: (Ministry Teams, Kids Central, AWANA, Youth, Many, many others)
  • Prayer:

Find one!

Groups.rtbc.org