



SIDEWALK TO FRONT DOOR

SIDEWALK TO FRONT DOOR, PART 2: STUMBLING AROUND THE KITCHEN

Growth, accountability, belonging and care happen in community groups—in circles, not rows. It's easy to stumble away from faith when you are a nameless person sitting in a row on a Sunday morning. But it's almost impossible to stumble away—or to stay away—when you're in community, doing life with a group of people.

BIG IDEA: It's easier to stumble out of church & away from God than it is to stumble out of community.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What have you celebrated in the life of a friend or family member over the past 12 months?
2. Before joining your first Community Group, what were some of the reasons you gave for not wanting to be in a group? How would you respond to someone wrestling with the same reasons now? What were some unexpected benefits of your group experience?
3. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Luke 17:1.*

He said to His disciples, "It is inevitable that stumbling blocks come, but woe to him through whom they come!"
Luke 17:1 (NASB)

4. Looking back, what have been some of your stumbling blocks (ideas, people, wealth, hard times)? Do you think it's possible for you to encounter something today that could cause you to stumble away from God? Please explain your answer.
5. Can you think of examples (from your experience or others) where a small group's involvement made someone's difficult time easier or less traumatic?
6. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Ecclesiastes 4:8.*

This is the case of a man who is all alone, without a child or a brother, yet who works hard to gain as much wealth as he can. But then he asks himself, "Who am I working for? Why am I giving up so much pleasure now?" It is all so meaningless and depressing.
Ecclesiastes 4:8 (NLT)

7. What is the status of the man in verse 8? How materially successful is he? At what cost? What is he questioning? Why does the writer of Ecclesiastes see the business in verse 8 as meaningless?
8. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.*

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (NLT)

9. How does being connected in community bring meaning into life? How does it bring meaning into your life personally?
10. Before joining your first Community Group, what were some of the reasons you gave for not wanting to be connected in community? How would you respond to someone wrestling with the same reasons now?
11. Suppose you made this commitment: "I am going to open my life in a way that allows others to know me deeply. I am going to find some people I will allow to see my deepest joys, needs, struggles, and victories. I am also going to invite them to open their hearts and lives to me on this same deep level."
12. What are some of the possible risks you would be taking?
13. What are some of the unexpected benefits you might experience?
14. How would your childhood have been different if your parents had been in a community group? How is your current community group experience affecting your children?

MOVING FORWARD

Our church is built on this principle: circles are better than rows. Still, creating authentic community takes time, trust, and commitment. What can you do this week to invest in your current group experience? What can you do to cast vision for a friend or family member who is currently not in a community group?

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

