



Live Life...
LOVED!

TALK IT
OVER
GROUP GUIDE
20170514

WELCOME LOVE PEOPLE EXTRAVAGANTLY

Does everyone know everyone? Go around the group and each person must share 3 facts of which one is a "Lie". People must guess which the untrue statement is. This enables the group to get a greater understanding of each other. Please make sure new people are made to feel welcome and at home.

WORSHIP LOVE GOD EXTRAVAGANTLY

Encourage the members to really lay aside the business of the past week, and focus on connecting with God, and what He wants to do in our lives.

WORD IMPART VICTORIOUS LIFESTYLE

God made Covenant with Us

During Sundays message at church, a very powerful statement was made: "As goes the family, so goes the nation!" or even stronger, "As goes the **Kingdom family**, so goes the nation!" Our covenant walk with God is what we represent to the world. The nation does not determine what goes on in the family unit. It's up to the family to produce strong value and culture that will in turn change the nation.

What Grows a Strong Family Culture?

Read Acts 2:38-47 and Discuss

Here we see the account of the early church. How they met in both Temple (church gathering) and house to house (connect groups). What are the main benefits of attending Connect Group?

1. **To make a big church smaller.**
2. **Comfortable environment for openness:** The small group atmosphere is ready-made for building friendships. People talk more in small groups of people. People are quick to recognize needs, and help to meet them. The relationships formed within small groups form a strong fabric within a church. Relationships that are formed outside of the (sometimes artificial) setting of a church service, are relationships that will endure and strengthen over time.

3. **Small groups provide a comfortable introduction for nonbelievers to the Christian faith:** Most of us tend to fear relationship-forming, especially when it involves sharing our faith with someone. That is a natural and understandable fear. Inviting someone instead to a small group meeting provides a way to involve a believer directly into a community of believers - watching them live out their faith, listening to them pray, hearing them share God's work in their life, and learning more about the Bible. The nonbeliever is more likely to ask questions, get answers, and form relationships with the believers. Small groups are a powerful missional tool, allowing for the greater spread of the gospel among nonbelievers in the community.
4. **Its where deeper relationships are forged.**
5. **Where we are able to be accountable to others regarding our lifestyle:** It's easy to slip in and out of church unnoticed. It's not just megachurches where this happens. In an average-sized church of 100 or 150, people may be coming each Sunday service, but not getting involved. These people may need accountability in their lives, encouragement in their walk with God, or help in some way. Small groups provide a way to better meet these needs.
6. **Where we are cared for emotionally and practically:** When one believer in a small group is struggling financially, emotionally, spiritually, socially, etc., it is much easier for the members of the group to notice and provide help. The structure of a small group is essentially a community of believing friends. Friends should help one another, especially Christian friends.
7. **Where we are able to care for others.**
8. **Where our gifting is revealed, and used to touch the lives of others.**
9. **Where our faith is built up.**
10. **Where we discuss the vision of the church, and how we can help get there:** It's easy to depend upon the professionals to give us our spiritual food. According to the Bible, God gives spiritual gifts to all believers, not just the guy who preaches on Sunday morning. These gifts are for the benefit of the whole church. Every Christian should minister to other Christians with his or her gifts. This happens most naturally, effectively, and purposefully in small groups. Plus, we start to realize that other believers face the same problems we do. Edification is at work.
11. **We get equipped and trained to become leaders ourselves.**
12. **We are disciplined and led as part of the Church family.**

Two areas to focus on are caring and exercising gifts:

1. **Caring** - How do we care for one another in Connect group? How do we know how other members in our group are doing well?
 - a. Time spent together
 - b. The safe environment where people can be open
 - c. NB always what is spoken personally in connect stays in the group.
2. **Exercising Gifts** - Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and Discuss
 - a. It's a place where we can trust the Holy Spirit to use us
 - b. Read 1 Corinthians 12:7 and 11 again. To who are the Gifts given? Why are they given?
 - c. We can learn how to bring a word of knowledge, encouragement etc.

3. Read Ephesians 4:11-16 and Discuss

- a. We are equipped through the connect group to do the “Good Work of the Ministry” as spoken about in this verse.
- b. We learn through the leaders and each other.

It's so important as a believer to not just be a person attending church only. That is only a part of what we are called to do as Disciples of Jesus. We need the temple gathering, as that is where the vision is cast for us a body of believers at Harvest Christian Church. Our family belonging is cemented and strengthened in our realising we are part of a family or body. Just like in a body, we all need each other to thrive. If we go back to our opening, where we said that as goes the kingdom family, so goes the nation... This is a key place to start the process. By being Kingdom family not just in word, but in our actions as well.

WORKS BE A RESOURCE + TOUCH THE World

DISCUSS

Who do you know that has been in church for ages but aren't in a Connect Group? Make an effort to speak to them in the week or at church on Sunday to join you next week.

PRAY Let's pray for:

1. People who have been offended or hurt in connect groups before.
2. That God will grow your group, thus reaching more people for God.
3. Trust God as you pray for each other for the Holy Spirit to use each person; to encourage with a word of scripture, knowledge etc.