



PROTOTYPE
Part 5: "Doing Life Together"
Sermon Small Group Notes
Speaker: Pastor Dave Patterson

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

- This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together. After considering the needs of your group, you may choose one of the following options:
 1. one section of questions
 2. one or two questions from each section
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.

Definition of "prototype": *the original or model on which something is based or formed*

Definition of "the Church": *a movement built around a man (Jesus Christ) and an event (the Resurrection) that require a response*

- *a gathering of people around a person and an event that are called to be God's vehicle of redemption*

- (Greek) "*ekklesia*" = *the gathering, the assembly, the congregation*

INTRODUCTION

We all have a tendency or temptation to disconnect from the body, to isolate ourselves and put our spiritual lives in a dangerous place. In this lesson, we will discuss the advantages of being vitally connected to the body of Christ through relationships that are discovered as we do life together in small groups.

[Ephesians 4.15-16]

¹⁵...Growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Metaphors of the Church:

Who we are when brought together:

- "Christ's body"
- "His flock"
- "The bride of Christ"
- "The temple where He dwells"
- "The family of God "
- "The army of God"
- "The household of faith"

Individual believers are referred to as:

- "Sheep of His pasture"
- "Members of His family"
- "Parts of His body"
- "Living stones in His building"
- "Joint heirs of His promises"
- "Soldiers in His army"
- "Sons and daughters in His House"

In all these images, the big idea is about being connected and the reality that we are part of one another.

None of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things with great love...and together we can do something great.

- Mother Teresa

MESSAGE

The early church prototype looked like small groups (house-to-house connections), and the Holy Spirit moved in power through them.

[Acts 2.42, 46-47]

⁴² All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

⁴⁶ Each day they worshiped together at the Temple, they met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity ⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

[1 Corinthians 16.19]

The churches here in the province of Asia send greetings in the Lord, as do Aquila and Priscilla and all the others who gather in their home for church meetings.

It is too easy to drift toward disconnection and isolation, so stay plugged in and positioned ready to receive from God and from one another.

The Holy Spirit connects us with those who will help us fulfill God's best for our lives, and without those connections, we live life at a diminished capacity.

[Hebrews 10.25]

And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people are in the habit of doing, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Familiar Reasons for Disconnection and Isolation:

1. **Busyness**
2. **A bad experience**
3. **Temperament** (“not my comfort zone”)
4. **Fear of the unknown**
5. **Unhealed relational wounds** (past experiences)
6. **Unaware of their deep need** (to be connected with other believers)
7. **Unwilling to deal with personal issues** (accountability quickly becomes uncomfortable)

What Small Groups will Add to Your Life:

1. **Support on your worst day--that day.**
2. **Protection from your greatest weakness.**

The areas of our lives that are hidden are the areas of greatest danger.

[James 5.16]

Confess your faults to each other and pray for each other so that you may live whole and healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

3. **Friends who can see your "blind spots" and speak the truth in love.**

[Proverbs 27.6]

Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy.

[Psalm 141.5]

If the godly correct me, it is soothing medicine. Don't let me refuse it.

People have an almost limitless capacity for self-deception.

<p><i>We don't know what we don't know and are therefore unconsciously incompetent.</i> - Samuel Chand</p>

4. **An atmosphere for personal growth (your gifts and full potential).**

Think about the seeds of "God thoughts" in your life: what would you like to see develop in your life through the context of relationships? Jesus wants you to be vitally connected to Him and to others and becoming the best version of yourself.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What is something simple that you have done in a group that became something incredible?**
- 2. How can you be more intentional in praying with other believers?**
- 3. Looking back at a Godly connection with another believer, how did that connection benefit the Kingdom?**
- 4. How are you being intentional to extend an "invitation" for others to connect with you?**
- 5. Who is a person in your life that has permission to confront you on areas of weakness?**