

## CT Church – New Believers

### Fellowship & Life Groups

#### Chapter 5

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*“Let us not give up meeting together, are some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” - **Hebrews 10:25***

*”Everyday they continued to meet together (KJV uses the word “fellowship” here) in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts...and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” – **Acts 2:46-47***

#### Fellowship

A friendly gathering of people with like or shared ideas. The Hebrew translation of the word uses “communion” which is sharing with or participating with.

The Lord wants us to be in fellowship with other believers. As He said on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of creation, *“It is not good for man to be alone...”* – **Genesis 2:18**.

In this session you will be introduced to our Life Groups. Life Groups are small meetings of believers from Community Transformation Church that take place in members’ homes. These groups are comfortable and casual gatherings that help you grow in your faith.

#### Small Groups in Scripture

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*“To Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your home.” – **Philemon 2***

Throughout Scripture there are references to churches meeting in homes. Paul told the Church that met in Rome,

*“Greet the church that meets at their house.” – **Romans 16:5***

*“Give greetings to the brothers at Laodicia and Nympha and the church in her house.” – **Colossians 4:15***

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The “church” that met in these homes was the basic unit of Christianity in the early years of the New Testament Church of Jesus Christ. There were certain dynamics that were found in small, close knit groups. More importantly, the major part of the New Testament was written to these small groups that were called the “church that meets in your home.” Today we refer to these groups as “connect groups.”

#### **Life Groups – the place where ministry occurs**

For first 300 years of the Christian Church there were no “church” buildings for public gathering or congregating. People met in local gathering places often in public. To “go to church” meant to go to someone’s house for prayer, worship and ministry.

*“For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”*  
**-Matthew 18:20**

*“Everyday they met together in in the temple courts (open public areas, not inside the actual temple). They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.” – Acts 2:46*

The Apostle Paul ministered house to house.

*“You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house.”*  
**– Acts 20:20**

Although there were group meetings in public places it wasn’t like we know “church” services today. However, much of the one-on-one, person to person ministry took place in the home or what we call the life groups.

More than ever, we need to experience dynamic and powerful meetings at our large gatherings. However, these large gatherings will be fueled by the strengthening of individuals that are meeting in small groups.

#### **Benefits of Life Groups**

#### **Benefits of Home Life Groups**

Each person can participate.

*“What then shall we say, brother?” When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.” – 1Corinthians 14:26*

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How would a large church congregation come together and everyone have a psalm, a doctrine, and a revelation? It's impractical to fulfill this scripture in a large group setting. However, it is much more achievable in a small home life group. When in a small group setting, people are encouraged to minister to each other and exercise the spiritual gift(s) that God has given them.

Each person can be disciplined.

*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” – **Matthew 28:19***

To be a disciple means to be disciplined in a teaching or practice. You are called to be taught the teachings of the Lord.

*“Listen to my instruction and be wise.” – **Proverbs 8:33***

Anyone who has been disciplined knows the time and the commitment demanded by this kind of relationship. Life groups offer regular encouragement, accountability and development.

Each person can be trained.

Another word that defines the act of discipleship is “mentoring.” We need the older, wiser members of our churches to mentor and train the younger members. Relationships that go far beyond normal scheduled church services are needed to accomplish this, and life groups provide that opportunity. Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul and other Biblical saints spent their lifetimes in ministry, mentoring and raising up leaders.

*“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”*

– **2Timothy 2:2**

*“Likewise teach the older women...Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children” – **Titus 2:4***

Each member can minister.

*“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good...first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles...gifts of healing, those able to help others...”*

– **1Corinthians 12:7-28**

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A life group is a great place for every member of the body of Christ to learn and develop ministry skills, discover spiritual gifts and learn how to apply those gifts and skills in real life ministry situations. By participating in regular small groups you learn how to counsel, how to encourage, serve others and how to lead others to Christ.

*“From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”*  
– **Ephesians 4:16**

Each believer needs valuable friendships.

It is easy to be shaped by the environment around us. You need to surround yourself around Godly people and Godly friends.

*“Do not be misled, bad company corrupts good character.”*  
– **1Corinthians 15:33**

*“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked.”*  
– **Psalms 1:1**

*“Two are better than one...If one falls down his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!”*  
– **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**

The community of believers that loves and cares for one another is a great testimony to the world as well.

*“By this all men will know you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*  
– **John 13:55**

In these small group settings we have an opportunity to glean truth about the Christian way of life from others. In the company of other believers, we learn how to grow up in our faith under positive and mature encouragement.

Reaching your family and friends

Since small groups are often very casual, they are great opportunities for friends and family to come learn about our Lord Jesus without being overwhelmed with a “formal” church gathering or service.

*“They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts...and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”* – **Acts 2:46-47**

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Jesus had 12 friends (the disciples) that He was continually with and even 3 that were especially close, so even Jesus was in regular fellowship.

Being around other like-minded believers will strengthen you and encourage you in your walk with Jesus. We are not meant to be alone but in fellowship, in relationship with other believers.

*“God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus...”*

**-1 Corinthians 1:9**

*But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another...” – 1 John 1:7*