

Phil Fisher

What's the Big Deal about Family Groups?

The Heartbeat of the Church

As we discussed in our Leaders Workshop on January 7th, Small groups are the heartbeat of the church and an essential part for bringing God's vision to life.

If small groups are the heartbeat, then [Acts 2:42-47](#) is the lifeblood that sustains them.

The staff and elders' team are excited to work together with our small group leaders and members to put [Acts 2](#) into practice.

Jesus and his followers have always been radically different from the communities they served exemplifying the term **"Countercultural"**. For Christianity to be effective in today's culture that is more digitally connected but more personally isolated than ever, people need to see our devotion to each other and to them.



"The Bible is like a telescope. If you look through it you can see worlds beyond, but if you look at it, you see only the telescope." - Anon

Rodney Fuller

Measuring Spiritual Health

Developing Maturity within your Family Group

Actively measuring your spiritual health is a practice that can keep our minds and hearts freshly cultivated as we strive to be more like Jesus. It also recognizes your need for deeper meaning and understanding in your walk with God. When we're spiritually healthy, we are more connected to God and those around us. Clarity marks our daily choices, and our actions become more consistent with our beliefs and values. As we journey together as leaders, let's look closer at five measurements of spiritual health that will help our family groups become stronger:

Worship: To honor or show reverence for God. The most common Hebrew word for "worship" (*Shachah*) literally means "bend over" or "bow down." It demonstrates an understanding of who God is and submission to Him (e.g., Genesis 18:2, Exodus 20:4 - 6).

Fellowship: A gathering of souls who decide to live, work, practice, study, play, and share all things we have in common in Christ.

Discipleship: Simply, the process of us helping each other become more like Jesus!

Ministry/Service: Working together in our family groups to meet the needs of many in our shared community.

Evangelism: Spreading the grace & truth of the Gospel of Christ to the community you are planted in and beyond. This "spreading" can take many forms, but the ultimate goal is the conversion of hearts to Jesus as Lord & Savior! To be certain, our love for our neighbor does not change even if they choose not to follow Jesus.

Let's take this holistic approach together and [Watch what the Spirit reveals!](#)



When they see [Acts 2:42-47](#) in action, they have opportunity to experience Jesus' message of grace and truth for themselves. The biblical word that applies to effective small groups is **Exiles (1 Peter 1:1)** because we are forced away from our homes in this world and have become **"Citizens of Heaven"**.

Let's all be in prayer to understand what it means to hold to Jesus' teaching as we live out our Family Groups' purpose in 2023.

"...people need to see our devotion to each other and to them..."

Faith, Hope, and Love

Focus from the Theme

Joel Shytle

A recap of his lesson from the January 7th workshop plus a few more nuggets to help us as we strive to grow in deeper relationship with our Great God!

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Setting the Table

Hospitality that THRIVES

Bob & Toni Lagatta

The Lagattas share some simple and successful thoughts on growing in our Family Group hospitality.

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Good News!

Around TCC

Coming Soon

In this section, we want to feature various Good News stories from around the congregation...**STAY TUNED!**

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Joel Shytle

FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE

The Charlotte Church 2023 Theme

Known as the **LOVE** chapter, **1 Corinthians 13** stands out as one of the most meaningful. It culminates in **verse 13** with our theme passage, “And now these things remain, faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

Let’s begin the discussion on our theme with the word **faith**. **Hebrews 11:1** tells us that faith is the “...assurance in what we do not see.” **Romans 10:17** tells us that “faith comes from hearing the message...”. In **James 2:17** we learn that faith is dead unless it is accompanied by action. From these three passages we can conclude that our assurance is increased by our study of God’s word as we put it into practice.

Biblical **hope** is confidence in a future outcome, **Romans 8:24-25**. Our ultimate hope is in the reward stored up for us in heaven, but our hope is not limited to the

everlasting. It is also a hope that is enjoyed through dreaming of what Jesus will do with us and through us as we walk with Him on earth.

We have covered faith and hope, but these are not the greatest. The greatest is **love**, and it grows through relationship: **to know and to be known**. Each of us has love stories to share and blind spots to discover. Satan wants us to forget them or to ignore them.

He wants us to settle for the shallow. By being vulnerable with one another, our love for one another increases. But remember that an essential ingredient is trust, which is built by investing time in, praying for, and praying with one another.

Our goal this year is to strengthen family groups and family group leaders through



studying God’s word together and through sharing our dreams and our stories of love. Let’s learn how to walk with each other through life as we each walk with Jesus in **faith, hope and love**.

“...dreaming of what Jesus will do with us and through us as we walk with Him on earth.”



“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”

Isaiah 52: 7

BRINGING GOOD NEWS!

“When I read the newspaper, I look for the good news because **every thought we think changes our biochemistry**. Your hormones are all affected by your thoughts. **Pay attention to things that bring you joy.**”

– Dr. Christiane Northup

“Do your little bit of good where you are; it is those little bits of good put together that **overwhelm the world.**”

– Desmond Tutu

Bob & Toni Lagatta

SETTING THE TABLE

There’s no better feeling than to be loved and valued for who you are.

Romans 12:9 is titled, “**Love in Action**” and talks about sincerity, devotion, honoring and practicing hospitality. Hospitality is the opportunity we get to make someone else feel loved and valued. When inviting anyone over, we usually ask about likes and dislikes or special needs so that the



mealtime will be enjoyable for everyone and lead to some great conversations. Keeping things simple helps. We start our FG Sundays with an hour of fellowship and eating together, and a box of waffle mix goes a long way in feeding a large group with a lot of kids!

But whether it’s a fancy meal, comfort food, or just coffee together, when people leave our home, we want them to feel loved and valued...**BECAUSE THEY ARE!**

“There’s no better feeling than to be loved and valued for who you are.”