

Message Title: **"RECONNECTING TO A SMALL GROUP!"**

Message Text: **Selected Passages**

*Introduction:*

***"THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR IS TO CONTINUALLY REMIND THE LORD'S PEOPLE OF WHO THEY ARE IN CHRIST & NOT FORGET IT!"  
(ANONYMOUS)***

**LET ME START MY SERMON TODAY BY READING THE HISTORY OF FBC! READ!!!**

**DID YOU HEAR THAT? HOW FBC STARTED AS A CHURCH? WE ARE JUST A SMALL GROUP OF BELIEVERS FELLOWSHIPING & DOING BIBLE STUDY TOGETHER! (A FEW OF YOU COULD STILL BE HERE TODAY WHO WERE PART OF THIS!).**

**THE REASON I BROUGHT THIS OUT IS BECAUSE OUR MESSAGE TODAY IS ALL ABOUT SMALL GROUP – RECONNECTING OUR LIFE TO SMALL GROUP!**

**LAST WEEK, WE LEARNED THE IMPORTANCE & INDISPENSABILITY OF A DEVOTIONAL LIFE IF WE ARE TO GROW AS BELIEVERS & DISCIPLES OF THE LORD. WE ARE TO HAVE ONE! TODAY, WE WILL COMPLEMENT THAT WITH STUDYING THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING AN ACTIVE PART OF A SMALL GROUP.**

**I PRAY THAT THIS 2021 WILL BE A BREAKTHROUGH YEAR FOR ALL OF US. I AM PRAYING THAT EACH MEMBER OF FBC WILL HAVE REVIVAL IN OUR DEVOTIONAL LIFE AS WELL AS RECOMMIT & RECONNECT OURSELVES TO BE AN ACTIVE PART OF A SMALL GROUP & BECOME EFFECTIVE & FRUITFUL IN MAKING DISCIPLES FOR CHRIST! **LET US PRAY!!!****

**WHAT IS A SMALL GROUP? IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, IT IS A GROUP OF 15-20 PEOPLE MEETING IN THE HOME OF A BELIEVER. TODAY, THE NUMBER & COMPOSITION OF IT VARIES FROM CHURCH TO CHURCH. DID YOU KNOW THAT THE EARLY CHURCH MET ONLY IN A CHURCH BUILDING AROUND 4 AD WHEN THE ROMAN EMPIRE EMBRACED ROMAN CATHOLICISM AS THEIR OFFICIAL RELIGION.**

**BEFORE THIS PERIOD THE BELIEVERS MEET IN THE HOMES OF BELIEVERS.**

**IN FBC, A SMALL GROUP IS EITHER AN E-GROUP (EVANGELISTIC) OR A D-GROUP (LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT). AN E-GROUP IS FOR REACHING OUT UNBELIEVERS & ASSIMILATING THEM TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH. A D-GROUP IS FOR DISCIPLING & DEVELOPING LEADERS WHO WILL LEAD AN E-GROUP OR D-GROUP.**

**A. WHY RECONNECT OURSELVES TO A SMALL GROUP?**

**I CAN GIVE SOCIAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS WHY WE ARE TO BE IN A HEALTHY SMALL GROUP WHICH IS KNOWN TODAY AS AN EFFECTIVE MEANS TO HELP ALCOHOLICS & ADDICTS TO RECOVER & BE TREATED. BUT WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO DO IS FOCUS ON WHAT THE BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, HAS TO SAY ABOUT SMALL GROUP. SO, LET ME BEGIN BY THIS REASON...**

**1) OUR LORD JESUS USED THE SMALL GROUP PRINCIPLE TO START & DEVELOP HIS CHURCH. HE ALSO USED IT TO EVANGELIZE THE LOST!**

**TAKE NOTE THAT EVEN THOUGH HE HAD A MULTITUDE OF FOLLOWERS, THE LORD DID NOT FOCUS HIS EYES ON THIS. BUT HE DELIBERATELY CHOSE TWELVE MEN & FOR AROUND THREE YEARS INVESTED A LARGE CHUNK OF HIS TIME & ENERGY TEACHING, DISCIPLING, & DEVELOPING THEM!**

***"During those days he went out to the mountain to pray and spent all night in prayer to God. When daylight came, he summoned his disciples, and he chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor."***

***(Luke 6: 12-16)***

**IN FACT, IN ONE INSTANCE IN THE GOSPEL, THE LORD SHOWED US HOW WHY HE DID THIS! HE WANTED TO WIN THE MULTITUDE FOR HIS GOSPEL OR GOOD NEWS!**

*When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.” (Matt. 9: 36-38)*

**THE SOLUTION IS BY SELECTING THESE FEW MEN & EQUIPPING/TRAINING THEM FOR THE WORK AHEAD! AND SO WE READ IN THE NEXT CHAPTER/VERSES THAT JESUS SENDS ON THE JOB TRAINING.**

*Summoning his twelve disciples, he gave them authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out and to heal every disease and sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles... Jesus sent out these twelve after giving them instructions...” (Matt. 10: 1-5)*

**TAKE NOTE ALSO THAT THE LORD JESUS KNEW HOW TO REACH THE PEOPLE – THRU THEIR HOMES OR HOUSES!**

*“When you enter any town or village, find out who is worthy, and stay there until you leave. Greet a household when you enter it, 13 and if the household is worthy, let your peace be on it; but if it is unworthy, let your peace return to you. If anyone does not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.” (vv. 11-15)*

**THEREFORE, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE LORD JESUS CHOSE & USED THE SMALL GROUP IN STARTING, DEVELOPING & SPREADING HIS GOSPEL TO THE PEOPLE!**

**2) THE EARLY BELIEVERS USED THE SMALL GROUP PRINCIPLE TO GATHER FOR EQUIPPING MINISTRIES: BIBLE STUDY, PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP & WORSHIP & EVANGELISM!**

NOW, THE EARLY PART OF ACTS 2 TELL US THAT THE CHURCH JUST DID THEIR FIRST EVANGELISTIC SERMON THROUGH THE TWELVE LED BY PETER. 3000 PEOPLE WERE SAVED. THEY WERE 120 AT THAT TIME. VERSE 41 SAYS THAT THESE 3000 PEOPLE WERE ADDED TO THE CHURCH & VERSE 42 SAYS "THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE APOSTLES' TEACHING..." THE QUESTION IS -- HOW DID THE EARLY CHURCH DO THIS & FOLLOWED UP ALL THESE PEOPLE & EQUIPPED THEM FOR MINISTRY? YES! THROUGH THE SMALL GROUP STRATEGY.

***They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.*** (Acts 2: 42-47)

OBSERVE ALSO THAT THIS IS NOT AN ISOLATED CASE IN THE LIFE OF THE EARLY CHURCH. THIS IS THE STANDARD PROTOCOL/ PRACTICE OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

***"Give my greetings to Prisca and Aquila, my coworkers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for my life. Not only do I thank them, but so do all the Gentile churches. Greet also the church that meets in their home. Greet my dear friend Epaenetus, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia."*** (Rom. 16: 3-5)

***"Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother: To Philemon our dear friend and coworker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your home."*** Philemon 1-2

***"Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters in Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her home."*** (Col. 15)

***“So those who were scattered went on their way preaching the word. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah to them.” (Acts 8: 4-5)***

**THEREFORE, THE EARLY CHURCH STARTED FROM A SMALL GROUP OF BELIEVERS & CONTINUED TO GROW USING THE SMALL GROUP STRATEGY THRU THE HOMES OF BELIEVERS AS PLACE TO GATHER TO DO THE LORD’S MINISTRIES - FOR FELLOWSHIP, PRAYER, COMMUNION, WORSHIP & SHARING THE GOSPEL & EQUIPPING!**

**3) THE APOSTLE PAUL USED THE SMALL GROUP PRINCIPLE TO TEACH & DISCIPLE NEW BELIEVERS, & START CHURCHES!**

**WHEN PAUL WAS SAYING HIS “GOODBYES” TO THE EPHESIAN ELDERS IN ACTS 20, HE CLEARLY POINTED OUT HOW HE MINISTERED TO THEM & CARRIED OUT THE LORD’S WORK IN THEIR MIDST!**

***“You know, from the first day I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, serving the Lord with all humility, with tears, and during the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. You know that I did not avoid proclaiming to you anything that was profitable or from teaching you publicly and from house to house. I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus.” (Acts 20: 18-21)***

**IN ONE OCCASION, THIS IS HOW PAUL TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES!**

***“Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly over a period of three months, arguing and persuading them about the kingdom of God. But when some became hardened and would not believe, slandering the Way in front of the crowd, he withdrew from them, taking the disciples, and conducted discussions every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.” (Acts 19: 8-10)***

***“You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. What you have heard from me in the presence of many***

*witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*  
*(2 Timothy 2: 1-2)*

**THEREFORE, PAUL DEMONSTRATED TO US THE VITAL ROLE OF THE SMALL GROUP MINISTRY IN HIS MINISTRY WITH THE CHURCHES THAT HE STARTED & PLANTED. HE USED IT TO TEACH, DISCIPLE, & EQUIP HIS DISCIPLES IN THE FAITH!**

### **APPLICATIONS/LESSONS:**

**1) THE SMALL GROUP PRINCIPLE IS FOUNDATIONAL IN STARTING, GROWING & EQUIPPING THE CHURCH/BELIEVERS!**

**WE SAW CLEARLY THAT THE LORD JESUS CHOSE TO USE & PRACTICE THE SMALL GROUP TO START & DEVELOP HIS DISCIPLES & GROW THE CHURCH. THIS WAS ALSO TRUE OF THE THE EARLY CHURCH. WE SAW IT TOO PRACTICED IN CHURCH HISTORY AS WELL AS IN CHRIST’S CHURCHES TODAY! THIS IS A TIMELESS PRINCIPLE THAT CHRIST’S CHRIST MUST USE IN ORDER TO START AS WELL AS TO GROW HIS CHURCH!**

**ILLUSTRATION: “FBC STARTED AS A SMALL GROUP OF BELIEVERS!”**

**IT IS IRONIC THAT WE STARTED AS A SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY IN 1993 & NOW WE DO NOT WANT TO BE A PART OF A SMALL GROUP. WHY? NUMBER ONE THAT I HEAR IS THAT MAHIRAP MAKISAMA DAW SA MGA PINOY. MGA PINTASERO AT CHISMOSA & MAKULIT DAW. THIS IS NOT A VALID EXCUSE BEFORE THE LORD. TRAUMATIC OR PAINFUL EXPERIENCE WITH BEING A MEMBER OF A GROUP BEFORE SHOULD NOT STOP US DOING GOD’S WILL.**

**REMEMBER MY SERMON ON SERVING CHRIST. THERE ARE THINGS THAT WILL MAKE US MOVE AWAY FROM SERVING CHRIST – PROBLEMS, PEOPLE, PRIDE. ITS HIGH TIME TO GET OBER WITH THESE THINGS & BE STAEDFAST & RESOLUTE IN SERVING CHRIST. FOR WE MAY HAVE NO TIME!**

**MY FORMER CHURCH, EMMANUEL, WERE ABLE TO START CHURCH THROUGH A SMALL GROUP OF BELIEVERS WHO WERE**



**WILLING TO BE USED BY THE LORD IN A PARTICULAR PLACE OR LOCATION & START AN OUTREACH THERE. WE HAVE NOW A CHURCH IN TAGUIG, CAVITE, NOVALICHES, DAGUPAN, BULACAN, ANTIPOLO.**

**2) THE CHURCH OR BELIEVERS OF CHRIST ARE CALLED NOT TO ISOLATION BUT TO A COMMUNITY!**

**AS I HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE, WE ARE CALLED NOT ONLY TO BELIEVE IN JESUS AS OUR SAVIOR BUT ALSO TO BELONG TO HIS BODY, THE CHURCH! WE ARE CALLED TO SHARE IN THE LIFE OF THE BODY. WHY?**

**a. SPIRITUAL GROWTH HAPPENS BEST WHEN WE ARE WITH OTHER BELIEVERS IN A SMALL GROUP!**

**b. IT RELEASES THE HOLY SPIRIT BY DISCOVERY & EXERCISE OF OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS. IT FACILITATES THE STUDY & OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD.**

**c. WE ARE CALLED TO FULFILL THE "ONE ANOTHER" COMMANDS OF THE LORD! AGAIN, LET ME REMIND YOU THAT THERE ARE 50 PLUS COMMANDS IN THE NT HOW WE ARE TO & NOT TO RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER! THESE INCLUDE - LOVE ONE ANOTHER, FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER, ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER, PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER, CARRY EACH OTHER BURDENS, ETC.**

**d. BEING A PART OF A SMALL GROUP MAKES US ACCOUNTABLE! THE LORD CALLED US TO BE A PART OF HIS CHURCH SO THAT WE WILL RESPONSIBLE & ACCOUNTABLE WITH OUR FELLOW BELIEVERS IN THE LORD. WE ARE OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER! MAY PAKIALAM NA TAYO SA KAPATID NATIN. BUT THERE ARE BIBLICAL GUIDELINES HOW TO DO IT!**

**3) THE BELIEVERS' HOMES CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE BASE FOR MINISTRY & A POWERFUL TOOL TO ADVANCE THE GOSPEL & FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION (DISCIPLEMAKING)!**

**OUR HOMES CAN BE USED BY THE LORD TO BE A PLACE OR VENUE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE TO GATHER FOR EQUIPPING, FELLOWSHIP, PRAYER, WORSHIP & EVEN SHARE THE GOSPEL!**

**CHURCH/BROS & SISTERS, I WANT YOU TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THIS. YOU CAN OPEN YOUR HOMES FOR THE LORD'S MINISTRY AND BE USED FOR HIS WORK. I PRAY THAT THE LORD WILL CONVICT YOU TO OPEN YOUR HOMES TO BE USED BY THE LORD FOR THE GOSPEL MINISTRY. IF YOU BELIEVE THE LORD IS TELLING YOU THAT JUST INFORM US AND WE WILL SIT DOWN TOGETHER TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN. WE WILL GROW IF YOU WILL OPWN YOUR HOMES FOR THE GOSPEL WORK BUT IT WILL ENTAIL SACRIFICES. BUT THE LORD WILL REPAY YOU AMPLY & ABUNDANTLY!**