

Small Group Ministry
January 28, 2007
Grace Bible Fellowship Adult Sunday School

1) The Premise for Small Groups

- a) Our mission on earth is to make disciples.

Matthew 28:18-20 (NAS)

18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- b) Making disciples is more than just a weekly Sunday church endeavor.

2) The Precedent for Small Groups

- a) Jesus taught Zaccheus at his home, away from the crowd.

Luke 19:1-10 (NAS)

1 He entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** And there was a man called by the name of Zaccheus; he was a chief tax collector and he was rich. **3** Zaccheus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd, for he was small in stature. **4** So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way. **5** When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house." **6** And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly. **7** When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." **8** Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much." **9** And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

- b) The Apostles taught small groups of people privately in their homes.

Acts 20:17-21 (NAS)

17 From Miletus he [Paul] sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. **18** And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, **19** serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; **20** how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, **21** solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 5:41-42 (NAS)

41 So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name. **42** And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

- c) Believers used their home for more in-depth discipleship.

Acts 18:24-26 (NIV)

24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. **25** He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. **26** He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

3) The Prodding for Small Groups

- a) Our response to the sacrificial work of Jesus is to be as follows:
- i) Increase our closeness to God.
 - ii) Persevere without wavering.
 - iii) Think of others. Spur them on in their daily walk with Christ.

Hebrews 10:19-25 (NAS)

19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, **20** by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near

with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; **24** and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, **25** not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

- b) Provoking others to love and good works requires meeting with them and spending time with them regularly.

4) The Priority for Small Groups

- a) Be dependent on the promise and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:37-41 (NAS)

[See also Acts 2:1-36 for a display of the Holy Spirit's power]

37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" **38** Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** "For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." **40** And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" **41** So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

- b) Focus on the following:
 - i) Teaching the Word
 - ii) Fellowship
 - iii) Communion
 - iv) Prayer
 - v) Service
 - vi) Meals
 - vii) Praise

Acts 2:42-47 (NAS)

42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. **43** Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. **44** And all those who

had believed were together and had all things in common; **45** and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. **46** Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

5) The Practicality of Small Groups

- a) Small groups allow for increased personal interaction, compared with the corporate assembly, to learn to apply biblical truths to everyday life.
- b) Small groups enable more depth and intimacy in Christian relationships, which leads to tighter mutual accountability.

List of "One Another" Commands

Accept one another

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. (Rom. 15:7)

Admonish one another

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Col. 3:16)

Bear one another's burdens

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal. 6:2)

Bear with one another

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. (Eph. 4:2)

Build up one another

Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification (*original=build up one another*). (Rom. 14:19)

Care for one another

. . . so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. (1 Cor. 12:25)

Comfort one another

Therefore encourage each other (*original=comfort one another*) with these words. (1 Thess. 4:18)

Confess faults to one another

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)

Be Devoted to one another

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. (Rom. 12:10a)

Encourage one another

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. (1 Thess. 5:11)

Forgive one another

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Eph. 4:32)

Greet one another

Greet one another with a holy kiss. (Rom. 16:16)

Be Honest with one another

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices . . . (Col. 3:9)

Honor one another

Honor one another above yourselves. (Rom. 12:10b)

Be Hospitable to one another

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. (1 Pet. 4:9)

Be Kind to one another

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Eph. 4:32)

Love one another

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another . . . (Rom. 13:8)

Members one of another

So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (Rom. 12:5)

Pray for one another

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)

Be of the Same Mind with one another

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves (*original=same mind among each other*) as you follow Christ Jesus . . . (Rom. 15:5)

Serve one another

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. (Gal. 5:13)

Spur one another on

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. (Heb. 10:24)

Submit to one another

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Eph. 5:21)

- c) Small groups create another opportunity to exercise spiritual gifts. (See Ephesians 4:11-13; Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 12:4-31 for spiritual gifts.)