

The Camp Hill Vision  
Seeking the Lost, Equipping the Saved and Bringing All Into the Image of God

## II. Cell Groups: Fellowship in Christ

Last week we started a series of lessons concerning our vision at Camp Hill. Many people in our congregation did not even know that we have a vision until last week because it is something that we have not been good at communicating. Our vision, or mission statement is this:

### Seeking the Lost, Equipping the Saved and Bringing All Into the Image of God

As discussed, this is a scripturally sound mission statement. There are four steps we must take in order to fulfill this vision and they are the following:

1) Discipline: Living for Christ

Last week we covered the need to have discipline in the lives of our members. Without self-discipline we must exercise church discipline for it is a natural growing step for a congregation.

2) Life Groups: Fellowship in Christ

In a moment we will be covering the importance to have fellowship in the congregation. I hope that it will be an eye-opener for us.

3) Bible Studies: Education toward Christ

Next week we will cover the necessity of having a sound education in the Bible in order to anchor our souls to Christ.

4) Good Works: Service to Christ

Two weeks from now we will cover the service aspect of our relationship with Jesus. All the talk in the world is no good if it does not move us in the right direction.

With this in mind, let us cover Fellowship in Christ. What do you think of when you hear the word *fellowship*? It is the Greek word *koinonia* (koy-nohn-ee'-ah) and means *partnership or participation with others*. Ultimately who in our fellowship with? It is with God.

- *1 Cor 1:9, "God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."*
- *Philippians 3:10, "that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings..."*
- *1 John 1:3, "...what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."*

Our fellowship with God is based in two primary areas, our resources and our interaction. Here are some of the many ways that the word for fellowship is used in the NT.

1) Our resources

- *Rom 15:26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution (*κοινωνία*) for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.*

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- 2 Corinthians 8:3-5, “For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability {they gave} of their own accord, <sup>4</sup> begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation (**κοινωνία**) in the support of the saints, <sup>5</sup> and {this,} not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.”
- 2 Corinthians 9:13-14, “Because of the proof given by this ministry they will glorify God for {your} obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution (**κοινωνία**) to them and to all, <sup>14</sup> while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you.”
- Hebrews 13:16, “And do not neglect doing good and sharing (**κοινωνία**); for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”
- 1 Timothy 6:18, “Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share (**κοινωνία**)...”

## 2) Our Interactions:

### a) It includes sharing in the suffering and joy of the church.

- 1 Peter 4:13, “...you share (**κοινωνέω**) the sufferings of Christ...”
- 2 Corinthians 1:7, “...you are sharers (**κοινωνός**) of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.”
- Hebrews 10:33, “partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers (**κοινωνός**) with those who were so treated.”

### b) It includes sharing in the work of the church.

- Philemon 1:17, “If then you regard me a partner (**κοινωνός**), accept him as you would me.”
- 1 Corinthians 8:23, “As for Titus, he is my partner (**κοινωνός**) and fellow worker among you...”
- Galatians 6:6, “The one who is taught the word is to share (**κοινωνέω**) all good things with the one who teaches him.”
- Philippians 1:5, “because of your partnership (**κοινωνία**) in the gospel from the first day until now.” (NIV)
- 1 Corinthians 9:23, “And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker (**κοινωνία**) of it.”

### c) It includes sharing in the dreams of the church.

- 2 Peter 1:4, “For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers (**κοινωνός**) of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”
- 1 Corinthians 1:9, “God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship (**κοινωνία**) with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”
- Philemon 1:6, “that the fellowship (**κοινωνία**) of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.”

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- d) It includes sharing in the purity of the church.
- *1 John 1:7, “but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship (**κοινωνία**) with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”*
- e) It includes sharing in the worship of the church.
- *Acts 2:41-42, “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. <sup>42</sup> And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship (**κοινωνία**), to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”*
  - *1 Corinthians 10:16-17, “Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing (**κοινωνία**) {**communion: KJV and participation: NIV**} in the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup> Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.”*

If we are planning on following the example set forth in the Bible concerning *fellowship*, then we must follow a pattern that is inclusive to sharing the in the funds, work, the sufferings and the joys, the dreams, the purity and the worship of the church for the cause Jesus Christ. What is our elder's choice of fulfilling this goal? They are called life groups.

### What Are Life Groups?

The congregation is split up into equal, randomly assembled groups with the intent of increasing fellowship among the congregation.

### Who Life Groups?

- 1) Everyone in the congregation.
  - a. The groups were assembled with no particular order because our natural tendency is to gravitate toward people like ourselves.
    - i. Randomness develops new relationships and make us stronger.
  - b. There is an elder over each of the life groups.
  - c. The deacons are also equally distributed among the groups.
  - d. There is a coordinator for each group who will organize the events.
- 2) Your friends and outsiders.
  - a. Statistics show that when non-Christians attend these groups for six months that they are likely to convert.
  - b. It provides an intimate setting to be effective in a relationship.

### Why Life Groups?

- 1) Smaller group of people where there can be focused caring and relationship building.
  - a. Often times click groups can form from among us. This resets the process and allows us to step outside of our comfort zone..
  - b. People become more familiar in circles, not lines. From the back of a pew it becomes difficult to know each other.

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- 2) Build a more functional community for more effective outreach.
  - a. It is much easier to invite an outsider to a life group in a home than to a worship service at the building.
  - b. Crossing the threshold of a doorway has always been a powerful statement to others.
    - i. Into the home means into the heart.
    - ii. Into the heart means into their life.
    - iii. Into their life means into Christ.

### When Life Group?

- 1) Rollout: From January 1<sup>st</sup> to end of school year
  - a. This will allow a good trial run.
  - b. The implementation and participation is crucial from the beginning.
  - c. The reason for break in the summer time is because of the lower attendance from traveling, vacations and Bible camps.
- 2) It is not meant to replace Sunday evening services.
  - a. Doug will still preach the first two Sunday evening sermons of the month.
  - b. Rotating life groups will be responsible for the other Sunday evening service at the building.
  - c. A life group can if necessary carry out their activity on a Sunday night.
    - i. If they do, then it is necessary to provide a corporate worship environment with singing, lesson, communion, etc.
    - ii. After that they can do whatever planned group activity.

### How Life Groups?

- 1) Community Service Projects
  - a. At least one per year.
  - b. Can have as many as they can handle or desire.
    - i. Golden Living Worship Service Volunteers
    - ii. Toys for Tots
    - iii. Nursing Home and Hospital Visits
    - iv. Etc.
- 2) One evening worship service at the building per month.
  - a. A member of a life group is not required to miss evening worship at the building in the event of planning an event at the same time.
  - b. The speakers would remain the same unless the life group at the building would like to work out something ahead of time.
- 3) Fellowship Meals
- 4) Other Activities

There you have it, the what, who, why, when and how of the fellowship portion of the vision in Camp Hill Church of Christ. May God bless our efforts to be effective in His kingdom!