

## The Camp Hill Vision

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

### III. Bible Studies: Education toward Christ (Part One)

We have been reviewing our vision for the month of December for the Camp Hill church family. If we fail to keep in mind and heart what our vision is, then we are doomed to not succeed in our goals for Christ as a congregation. What is our vision as spelled out in the Bible?

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The four steps necessary to embrace our vision in a scriptural way are the following:

- 1) Discipline: Living for Christ
- 2) Cell Groups: Fellowship in Christ
- 3) Bible Studies: Education toward Christ
- 4) Good Works: Service to Christ

The focus of this lesson is Bible Study and the aim is to generate a spirit of wanting to learn more about God's word and applying it to our lives. I could cover a number of types of study, but it will be Small-Group, Home Bible Studies which shall be emphasized. Let us begin.

#### The Small Group Home Bible Study Program was the Cornerstone of Jewish Education.

Moses recorded in Deuteronomy 6:4-9, "*Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!* <sup>5</sup> *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.* <sup>6</sup> *These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.* <sup>7</sup> *You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.* <sup>8</sup> *You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.* <sup>9</sup> *You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*"

Notice that the basis of the educating was to be in the home. This is where Jewish children would learn about God and how to live for Him. This is the same location that the adults would learn to be growing closer to God in their relationships.

The same applies to the New Testament Christian as well. *Ephesians 6:4*, "*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*" Every mother and father is charged with bringing up their children in a godly environment for the Lord. Life was to be an education and the primary location was the home.

#### Jehoshaphat Took the Small-Group Home Bible Study Program to a National level.

It says in 2 Chronicles 17:7-9, "*Then in the third year of his reign he sent his officials...and with them the Levites...and with them...the priests.* <sup>9</sup> *They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.*"

Notice he was not going to wait until the people came to Jerusalem for education, but instead took education to their homes. Jehoshaphat knew that the people would not change apart from the word of the Lord being sown into their hearts and he sought to increase the odds of it occurring. They were making the difference and the result was the nation drawing closer to God for decades.

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### Jesus Led a 3 ½ Year Small-Group, Home Bible Study Program for His disciples.

Jesus really did not have a regular location called home. Luke 9:58 states, “*And Jesus said to him, ‘The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.’*” Jesus attempted to have a small group home Bible study at His apartment, but there were too many showing up. Mark 4:20, “*And He came home, and the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal.*” From then on His home became other people’s homes as He traveled.

- *Matthew 26:6, “Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper...”*
- *Mark 1:29, “they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.”*
- *Mark 9:28, “When He came into the house...”*
- *Luke 4:38, “Then He got up and left the synagogue, and entered Simon’s home.”*
- *Luke 10:38-39, “Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord’s feet, listening to His word.”*
- *Luke 14:1, “He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees...”*
- *Luke 19:5, Jesus said “Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”*
- It was in the large upper room of someone else’s home which Jesus uttered the famous words, “*In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*” (John 14:2-3)

Jesus did not do His best work in an office at a church building or some other establishment, but in the homes of others. We must view the homes of our members as branch offices for the kingdom of God.

### Jesus Encouraged His Disciples to Hold Small-Group, Home Bible Studies.

- *Matthew 10:12-14 “As you enter the house, give it your greeting. <sup>13</sup> “If the house is worthy, give it your blessing of peace. But if it is not worthy, take back your blessing of peace. <sup>4</sup> “Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet.*

There is something about crossing the threshold of a doorway that makes a big difference. It is what turns outsiders into insiders. Jesus wanted them to take an active role in the conversion of others.

### The Apostles continued in Jesus’ Small Home Group Bible Study Program.

- *Acts 2:46-47, “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...”*
- *Acts 5:42, “And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”*

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- *Acts 20:20-21*, "...how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house<sup>21</sup> solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Without a doubt they taught in different formats (the Temple, the synagogues, in the mountains), but it was the Small-Group, Home Bible format that made the greatest difference. They clearly followed the pattern of Jesus.

### The Church Continued in the Apostles' Small Home Group Bible Study Program.

- *1 Corinthians 16:19*, "The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house."
- *Colossians 4:15*, Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house."
- *Romans 16:5*, "...also greet the church that is in their house..."

It was clear that the small group home Bible study program was in place during the early workings of the church. Imagine where the church would be today had not this pattern been followed. Let us use the life of Timothy and understand how powerful this method is.

### Timothy likely grew up in a Small Group Home Bible Study Environment.

We are first introduced to Timothy in Acts 16:1, "Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek." He was educated in the home concerning the scriptures. *2 Timothy 3:15* "...and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

His faith was nurtured in the home by his mother and grandmother. *2 Timothy 1:5*, "For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well." They believed in the concept of the Small Group Home Bible Study Program as spelled out in *Proverbs 22:6*, "Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it." Souls like Timothy do not happen by accident, but through education and nurturing in the word of God.

That is just a brief history of the Small Group Home Bible Study perspective. The point in covering it is because we often forget that there is no new thing under the sun when it comes to this topic. Small group studies have an incredible track record scanning many thousands of years. The methods of the message might change, but the message of the God never changes. Trust the system of the Small-Group, Home Bible Study concept.

### Where Do We Go From Here?

All this is just information if there is not a vehicle to make it happen. I am happy to announce the Small-Group, Home Bible Study program is being ramped up at Camp Hill once again. There will be a greater emphasis like in the past concerning our program.

Beginning January we will have many more studies for the year up and running for our members. The studies will be held in the homes of our members from many locations and several topics. We must make every effort as a congregation with a vision to pursue attendance in at least one of these studies per year.

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There are two different types of studies, short-term and long-term. Here are some which are on the docket.

### Short-Term Studies

Tuesdays (January 6, 13, 20, 27, February 3, and 10) at 6:30 PM

Kathy Radczenko's in Enola

Christian Apologetics

Thursdays (January 8, 15, 22, 29 February 5, 12, 19 and 27) at 6:30 PM

Risser's Home in Lebanon

Spiritual Giftedness

Fridays (beginning January 23)

Mike and Dawn Chapman's Home at 6:30 PM

Parenting God's Way

Saturdays (January 10, 17, 24, 31 February 7, 14, 21 and 28) at 7:00 PM

Buck's Home in Harrisburg

Spiritual Giftedness

### Long-Term Studies

Tuesday 10:30 AM at Newport Episcopal Commons

Presently covering the Book of James

Wednesday 10:30 at Reta Getz (717-991-4195)

Presently covering various topics

Thursdays 7:00 PM at Lou and Rayma Boccio's

Presently covering the Book of John

Fridays 7:00 PM at Mike Reeves Home

Presently covering the Life of Christ

Fridays Once a Month 10:00 AM at Deitch's Gym

Women's Study