

Doing Life Together...

7 Reasons to step into Community

1. You will begin to really feel like part of God's family! Most people who have been a part of a small group say the greatest benefit is the close relationships and friendships that develop. Over fifty times in the New Testament the phrase "one another" is used to describe our relationship to other believers. We are instructed to love one another, encourage one another, pray for one another, accept one another, bear one another's burdens, and build up one another.

2. Prayer will become more meaningful to you! Many people are hesitant to pray in front of others, especially in a large church. In a small group, you will learn to participate in prayer by having a conversation together with God. No one is pressured to pray, but as you become comfortable, you'll be able to pray sentence prayers and join in. In praying together with a few others, we are drawn together and we find answers to the needs in our lives.

3. You will be able to handle stress and pressure better! Your group will provide your primary support in times of crisis, change, and stress. You'll have a sense of stability and security knowing there are people who really care for you and are committed to standing with you. Small groups often provide care and support when someone loses a job, a family member has an extended illness, or a mother needs a babysitter...and much more!

4. You will have a natural way to share Christ with friends, relatives, and work associates! Most of us have friends who have not placed their faith in Jesus Christ. They have a preconceived idea about church and Christians and just the thought makes them defensive. But those same people may be open to an invitation to a casual gathering and discussion in a home. In a Small Group, your unbelieving friend can ask questions and express honest doubts without feeling "put on the spot". When your friend sees the love and warmth and honesty of your group, it will make him more receptive to the Good News.

5. You will use your gifts and develop leadership skills you never knew you had! The Bible teaches that every believer is given certain talents or "gifts" to benefit others in the family of God. Unfortunately, most Christians remain as Sunday morning spectators all their lives because large group meetings are primarily "sit and listen" situations. As you share and participate in a relaxed small group setting, you'll discover your confidence and self-esteem rising, and when you are ready you'll be willing to step out when the opportunity arises. Developing your leadership skills will help you at work, at church, and in every other relationship.

6. You will deepen your understanding of worship! Many believers mistakenly feel that worship can only happen on Sunday morning in a large group with music and a sermon. Worship happens anytime we focus on God. Sometimes that happens in a small group by praying or singing together, serving together, or having fun together.

7. You will be a New Testament Christian! The book of Acts is very clear about how God intends for his people to grow (be disciplined) and have their needs met in the church. We will never be able to hire enough professional pastors to meet all the individual needs in our family. God never intended for it to be that way! Small groups help us to live out the belief of the Priesthood of ALL believers. Consider these verses:

- "They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Every day they continued to meet together... they broke bread in their homes and ate together... and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:42, 44, 46-47
- " Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the Good News that Jesus is the Christ." Acts 5:42
- "Greet also the church that meets at their house." Rom. 16:5
- "Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord and so does the church that meets at their house." I Cor. 16: 19

Small Groups have these seven benefits that no believer can afford to pass up. If you are not participating in a group, why not join one or better yet, lead one! Contact doinglifetogether@mountainpark.org with any questions.

