
SOLA FIDE

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Importance of Small Group

This month marks the first year since I joined my small group last year in February. It may be “no big deal” to some, but to me, it is meaningful. You see, I have never been in a small group setting before. As a pastor’s daughter, one might assume that I have experienced all the possible church activities, but I was actually too busy babysitting or helping my dad in other aspects of the church that I had no opportunity. After becoming a member of Mustard Seed Community Church, I was placed into a small group for the very first time. Initially, I admit I was more excited to build a strong relationship with the sisters than deepening my relationship with God. But with each meeting, our devotional sharing, memorizing verses, and the continuous reminders to prioritize God and the things of God changed my perspectives on why small group is such an important element in Christian life. I would like to share my experience of what I learned about small group over the past year. This is not an instruction of how small group should look like, but my personal reflection of my small group and how it helped me in my walk with Christ.

First, small group has helped me build a stronger relationship with the sisters. Although forming a close sisterhood is not the primary focus of small group, it is still an important process we cannot ignore. People nowadays can easily attend a church (large or small) without anyone knowing who you are or develop meaningful relationship. However, small group provides a venue to deepen our relationship with others who have committed themselves to the same faith and same fellowship. This friendship paves the way for members to share their opinions, thoughts, and even personal struggles. It is within a small group that people can get close enough to know each other, to challenge and support, to confide and confess, to laugh and weep, to forgive and be forgiven, to pray for each other, to watch over each other and to grow together spiritually (Hebrews 10:24-25, James 5:16).

Second, small group provided me the accountability needed for the Christian life. Big church and small church alike, can be lacking depth unless there is an accountability where a person can be checked regularly. Unless people are part of a small group, it is quite difficult for church members to give and receive genuine accountability. Small group is beneficial because it provides a space where fellow Christians can form intentional, close relationships that foster

List of activities for small group

1. Read the whole Bible together in a year
2. Hold prayer meetings during small group
3. Memorize bible verses and cite them cumulatively
4. Read a Christian book together and share each other's thoughts
5. Review the past Sunday sermon together and share each other's thoughts

deep, face to face, sharpening of one another's spiritual life ("Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another" - Proverbs 27:17). In the Old Testament times, an iron blade was struck against another iron blade until both were sharpened and became effective tools. When left alone, both blades would become dull and thus useless. Likewise, it is absolutely important for Christians to have an accountability group to help sharpen each other and to deepen their personal relationships with God.

Third, small group deepened my personal relationship with Christ. Not to belittle other aspects of Christian life, but small group provides an opportune environment to deepen the personal comprehension of the things of God. For example, questions about the Bible and applications from Sunday message can be intimately discussed. As we talk about our devotionals and how God works in our lives, we learn from each other, get encouraged and gain insights to deepen our own faith. We pick up different strategies and habits that our fellow members utilize to bring about spiritual discipline and positive changes in our own lives. Small group galvanizes both the individual and the whole group to trust, obey, love and follow Christ all the more.

Small group is a valuable part of a Christian community life and by joining one, you can receive and give yourself to others: "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). Christians are taught to check and be accountable to one another, yet, it cannot be done effectively unless there already exists a personal and growing relationship between group of people. How ridiculous would it look for a Christian person to check, rebuke or correct other Christians when there is no personal relationship with them. Small group has been a tremendous benefit to me, to others and to the church. So why not join it if your church offers it to you. Reflecting back on the year, I recognized that small group is a blessing and a gift from God. I am filled with thankfulness to God for allowing me to be part of a vibrant small group and giving me a new understanding of the importance of small group for a healthy Christian living.

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