

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Churches and Small Groups Can Build A Culture
of Reaching Out To Friends, Family, Neighbors
and the Community

- ▶ Some people say they have few friends.
- ▶ Some of us live insulated lives. We go to work, then come home and don't interact with many people except our family.
- ▶ Even at church, school, work and in our neighborhood, it is possible to be surrounded by people and still not connect at a deeper level.

THE PROBLEM

- ▶ We want to connect with Christian friends so they can help us grow and we can help them. We need to be intentional and have a plan.
- ▶ We also want to connect to friends outside the church and help them see what a Christian community of grace and faith is like. Jesus told us we can be salt and light to all the world.
- ▶ Which would be helpful to you – finding more friends, or being a friend to more people?

THE CHALLENGE

Matthew 5:14-16 *“You are the light of the world ... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

- ▶ What are a few ways you could be more intentional to connect to people at work and in your neighborhood?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

Mark 5:19 *“Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.”*

- ▶ Is it easy or hard for you to tell your family and relatives about your faith and what you are learning? What would make it easier?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

Matthew 4:19 *“Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”*

Acts 1:8 *“you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

- ▶ Tell about a time someone was a witness of Christ to you.
- ▶ Tell about a time you shared your story or the gospel with someone else.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

I Peter 3:14-15 *“do not be frightened. But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect”*

- ▶ What things have you done, and what things would you like to do, so that you are more prepared to give an answer?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

- ▶ **BEFORE:** What was your life like before you met Christ?
- ▶ **HOW:** How did you come to the place where you trusted in Christ alone for your salvation and began to follow him?
- ▶ **AFTER:** What are a few ways you have been learning and growing? What are one or two differences in your life?
- ▶ What scripture verses in the Bible have been especially meaningful to you?

TELLING YOUR STORY OF FAITH

- ▶ You can't become friends with, or share your story with, people you have never met. Make a list of ways you can meet new people.
- ▶ Walk door to door and introduce yourself to 5 or 10 neighbors.
- ▶ Host a cookout for your neighbors.
- ▶ Take some cookies when new neighbors move in.
- ▶ Host a Christmas party for your neighbors.
- ▶ Go door-to-door to ask for prayer requests.

IDEAS FOR INDIVIDUALS

- ▶ Sit together as a class when you go to the worship service.
- ▶ When a guest visits your class, someone should sit with them in worship.
- ▶ Plan a monthly party for your class and invite as many friends, neighbors and relatives as you can.
- ▶ Plan some special events to invite people to attend – water skiing, a snow ski trip, a camping trip, a weekend retreat, a hayride, a service project to help one or several people.

IDEAS FOR BIBLE STUDY CLASSES

- ▶ Retired people
- ▶ Single adults
- ▶ Cancer support
- ▶ Exercise group – biking, running, walking, weightlifting
- ▶ Mothers of preschoolers
- ▶ A sports team

IDEAS FOR AFFINITY GROUPS

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