

Heritage Christian Church

Participating Membership

Group Life



Connecting to God's Family

(Lesson 6 of 8)

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Day 1 ***The Community of Believers***

The early believers in Christ did not want to live the new life they'd found alone. What do you learn about their relationships with each other from the following verses?

Acts 2:44-47

Acts 4:32-35

In Hebrews 10:24-25, the writer of Hebrews actually gave a command about community life. How would you rephrase this passage in modern terms?

Day 2 ***The Few in the Midst of Many***

In addition to large groups, where else did Christians get together according to Acts 2:46?

(See also 1 Corinthians 16:19 and Colossians 4:15)

What do you suppose they got out of these smaller, house-sized group meetings that they didn't get out of bigger gatherings?

Mark 6:30-32 reveals that Jesus often withdrew from the larger crowds to be alone with His few disciples. What are some benefits of being in a smaller group?

Why would it be impossible to fulfill the following biblical commands if you were only attending Heritage's weekend services without having any close relationships?

Galatians 6:1-3

Colossians 3:16

At times, it appeared Jesus needed just a few by His side. What is the relational significance of what Jesus did in Mark 14:32-35?

Day 3 ***Christ-like Attitudes in Every Relationship***

Read Philippians 2:1-8. Verse 5 says that we should have the same attitude that Christ did. Describe that attitude, using verses 3, 4 and 7 as references.

All of us play the role of followers at some level of our Christian experience. What do the following Scriptures teach about the characteristics of a good follower in the church?

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

Hebrews 13:17

(See also 1 Corinthians 16:15-16)

2 Timothy 2:23-24 points out that, unfortunately, quarreling can happen among members of the church. How would you put into your own words what our attitude and response should be?

Day 4

Put in your own words the procedure Jesus outlines for conflict resolution in Matthew 18:15-17.

What is the issue Proverbs 16:28, Romans 16:17, and James 4:1-3 have in common?

Why do you think the Bible is so passionate about its message not to cause divisions or factions in a church?

The Elders' Statement on "Group Life"

A Christ follower honors God's call to participate, to express and receive love, and to carry out the ministry of the church in order to grow closer to the image of Christ.

For this reason, Christ followers give priority to attending the corporate gatherings of the church for the purpose of worship, teaching, and participation in the sacrament of Communion, and are connected relationally to a small group of believers for the purpose of mutual encouragement, support, and accountability.

Christ followers also:

- pursue Christ-honoring relationships at home, within the church, and in the marketplace, and are committed to pursuing the biblical pattern of reconciliation when conflict arises.
- support the leadership of the church and are biblically submissive to it.
- affirm and uphold the fundamental truths of Scripture (as summarized in our Statement of Faith) and refrain from promoting other doctrines in ways that cause dissension.

Day 5

Personal Response Group Life

(Please retain for your membership confirmation)

Consistent with God's call to commitment and community within a local church body, do you regularly participate in the corporate gatherings of Heritage Church?

Yes

No

If not, is there a specific reason?

Do you affirm the specific mission and objectives of Heritage?

Yes
 No

If not, what aspects are you unable to affirm and embrace?

Do you pledge your cooperation to the elders of the church and those in leadership positions?

Yes
 No

If not, why?

The Heritage Statement of Faith summarizes the basic truths of Scripture. Do you wholeheartedly affirm that statement?

Yes
 No

If not, what are your specific reservations?

Will you refrain from promoting doctrines not found in our Statement of Faith in ways that caused dissension?

Yes
 No

Are you connected to a Life Group or Ministry Team here at Heritage for the purpose of growth, loving support, accountability, and service?

Yes
 No

If not, please explain why.

Describe the quality of your Life Group life or Ministry Team experience and how it is impacting your spiritual growth.

Note: The value of “group life” is that somewhere, on a regular basis with a few other believers, all participating members have face-to-face meetings that help shape them – places they give and receive care. We believe that a Heritage Life Group or close Ministry Team is an optimal place for that to happen. But we realize that some individuals may be committed to the value of significant relationships without, for various reasons, being in a formal group at a particular time. So we give a lot of latitude as to what kind of group this might be. At a minimum, it must be with other believers where you get to know them and they get to know you, and Christ is central to the group. We would also consider groups not formally connected with Heritage, but there are some disadvantages to those kind, and groups here at Heritage will most clearly mirror our values. The key, however, is to get in a Life Group or Ministry Team and grow to become a more mature disciple of Jesus Christ.

Do you have any relationships anywhere, such as within the church, at work, or at home, that are dishonoring to God (i.e., broken or impure relationships)?

- Yes
- No

If so, please describe the problem.

As far as it is up to you, are you committed to pursuing the biblical pattern of conflict resolution as described in Matthew 18:15-17 to rectify those or any future relational conflicts?

- Yes
- No

If not, please explain.

Note: Relational breakdowns are usually complex matters. We recognize and respect that. At the same time, participating members should be willing to engage in the strenuous process of conflict resolution. They should display humble hearts, a willingness to examine and address personal issues that may have contributed to the conflict, and openness to receiving counsel where appropriate.