



Authentic Small Groups

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We will intentionally connect everyone in small groups and mentoring relationships where we experience spiritual growth, genuine community, and caring, accountable friendships.

Romans 12:4-16

We are all parts of (Christ's) one body, and each of us has different work to do. And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others.

God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out when you have faith that God is speaking through you. If your gift is that of serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, do a good job of teaching. If your gift is to encourage others, do it! If you have money, share it generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Don't just pretend that you love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Stand on the side of the good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy in your work, but serve the Lord enthusiastically.

Be glad for all God is planning for you. Be patient in trouble, and always be prayerful. When God's children are in need, be the one to help them out. And get into the habit of inviting guests home for dinner or, if they need lodging, for the night.

If people persecute you because you are a Christian, don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. When others are happy, be happy with them. If they are sad, share their sorrow. Live in harmony with each other. Don't try to act important, but enjoy the company of ordinary people.

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1. Genuine Community: We are created for community

"And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others." (Rom. 12:4)

*"In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if...your gift is **serv**ing others, serve them well. If you are a **teacher**, teach well. If your gift is to **encourage** others, be encouraging. If it is **giving**, give generously. If God has given you **leadership** ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing **kindness** to others, do it gladly." (Rom. 12:6-9)*

2. Spiritual Growth: Change happens in circles, not rows

*"let us aim for harmony in the church and try to **build each other up**" (Rom 14:19)*

By modeling

"Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable." (Rom. 12:17)

By teaching "You know these things so well you can teach each

other all about them" (Rom. 15:14) "Teach and counsel each other" (Col. 3:16)

By encouraging "If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging"

*(Rom. 12:8) "So encourage each other and **build each other up**" (1 Thess. 5:11)*

3. Caring Friendships: When you care, you share

*"Don't just pretend that you love others. Really love them... **Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.**" (Rom. 12:10)*

By harmony : "**Live in harmony** with one another." (Rom 12:16; see 18)

*"Be **humble and gentle**. Be **patient** with each other, **making allowance** for each other's faults because of your love." (Eph. 4:2)*

By hospitality : "**When God's people are in need, be ready to help them.**

Always be eager to practice hospitality." (Rom. 12:13)

By empathy : "**When others are happy, be happy with them. If they are sad,**

***share their sorrow.**" (12:15) "**Share each other's troubles and problems.**" (Galatians 6:2)*

4. Accountable Friendships: Transparency protects me

"Don't think you are better than you really are" "don't think you know it all!" (Rom. 12:4,16)

*"if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly **help that person back** onto the right path." (Galatians 6:1)*

*"we will speak the **truth in love**, growing in every way more and more like Christ" (Eph. 4:15)*