

**I. Intro: Show “Fellowship” skit video**

- A. Joining a small group can be scary!
- B. BUT, Small groups are one of God’s BEST ideas! ;-)

**Sermon Description**  
 pastor Bill Young  
 Win, Build, Send part 4  
 January 25, 2014 Draper

**II. Welcome! I’m Bill Young...****III. We need each other! Examples...**

1. **Frodo** - Gandolf, Sam, & fellowship
2. **Lone Ranger** - Tonto
3. **Neo** (Matrix) - Trinity & Morpheous
4. **Dorothy** - Scarecrow, tin man, lion & Toto
5. **Sponge Bob** - Patrick & Squidworth
6. **Jesus** had the 12 !

**A. Q: Who do YOU have? Who is there for you?**

1. Answer grow BIGGER, we need to get SMALLER
2. **Trans:** Together is better...  
Psalm 34:3 “Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt His name together”  
Helps accomplish ALL God has for us!

**IV. God has a plan for the Church (Acts 2:40-47)**

1. “Church” Mentioned **79** times in NT (NIV)
- A. BUT...Which is it...Large or Small? **It’s BOTH!**
  1. **Temple** meetings (Acts 2)
  2. **House** meetings
  3. We need **both!**
  4. **Trans:** Let’s take a look at God’s plan for small groups, and how they are an essential part of God’s plan!

**B. Three reasons we need small groups...**

1. **Today** \* (If this is a SG Zoo weekend), get to hear from SG leaders & sign up!

**V. PRAY****SMALL GROUPS**

Joining a small group can actually be a scary proposition for some people. But in reality Small Groups are one of God’s biggest and best ideas! The word “church” shows up in the bible no less than 79 times. In some cases we read of large group meetings at the temple and a other times we hear of smaller groups gathering in homes. Which is it? Large or small? The answer is... it’s both! In this message we’ll take a look at God’s plan for small groups, and how they are an essential part of God’s plan for every believer’s life!

**“Failure to thrive syndrome.”**

There are many who have become familiar with the Greek word ‘koinonia.’ The most common thing people say is that it means “fellowship.” I ask you to keep that thought in mind as we go through the lesson.

I want to start with a short story about something terrible that happens to some Romanian orphans and a real medical condition many of them suffer from.

In Romania, and in many Eastern European countries, there are so many orphans institutionalized that there isn’t enough food or medical supplies or staff members to take care of them. The babies, often past toddler age, are still kept in diapers and placed in cribs because there’s no other way to take care of them. They are lifted out to be fed and they infrequently have their diapers changed. There is no real physical contact with other humans, especially any of the cuddling and holding that babies need to develop normally. They end up in semi-catatonic states and often die from a lack of human contact. This condition is called “failure to thrive syndrome.”

We need to understand that “failure to thrive syndrome” can happen in our spiritual lives. It can be avoided and it can be cured. But, prevention doesn’t happen by itself.

Three reasons we need small groups...

## I. We Need People ... To Adequately Survive

**1. Ex. Romanian orphans:** "failure to thrive syndrome."

Christians can be the same! God's plan - the family of believers!

### A. Small groups function like a spiritual FAMILY.

1. Examples of 'Home Churches'

**Romans 16:5** Greet also the church that meets at their house.

**1 Corinthians 16:19** Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house.

**Colossians 4:15** Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

**Philemon 2** to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home...

**2, "Christian life is caught, not taught"**

**Ex. [Pic] My first group - Following Godly examples!**

### B. God's plan is for Christian COMMUNITY.

**Acts 2:42-47** They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. **[No "Lone-Ranger" Christians allowed! ;-)]**

**1. Coal Illustration** -Same when removed from true fellowship.

## II. We Need Fellowship ... To Be Fully Alive

**1. Fellowship?** Drinking coffee and eating deserts??

Good ... but, much more than that.

**2. Gk "Koinonia" = "Fellowship":**

Defined as "fellowship," "participation," "sharing," "partnership," and "communion."

**QT: Mel Lawrenz** - Elements of koinonia, such as sharing material goods, sharing in ministry, and being partners in the gospel, are rooted in the spiritual reality of a connection between believers that is based on their connection to Christ."

**QT: Rick Warren** "Fellowship is a place of grace, where mistakes aren't rubbed in but rubbed out. Fellowship happens when mercy wins over justice."

**Trans:** We see meaning of fellowship in **Acts 2**

### A. They WITNESSED God's goodness together (v43)

**ACTS 2:43** (NIV) Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.

1. They had the same spiritual history.

Shared experiences builds our common faith (**Ex. Moving to Utah together/church plants**)

### B. They SHARED material possessions together (v44-45)

**ACTS 2:44-45** (NIV) All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

1. Helped with physical needs

**2. Ex. Meals for moms, clothing, furniture, support, \$\$**

### C. They WORSHIPED together (46a & 47)

**ACTS 2:46a, 47** (NIV) Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

1. They met in the temple

2. Church is not just a social club

### D. They EXPERIENCED life together (46b)

**ACTS 2:46b** (NIV) They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,

1. It is so important to BE together!

**Share joys, pains, triumphs, struggles; We listen, rejoice, cry with, and pray for each other!**

## III. We Need Small Groups ... To Utterly Thrive

1. BUT "I can be a Christian w/outgoing to church!"

True... but you will never mature/ persevere w/out fellowship.

**Hebrews 10:25** Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another ó and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

### A. Community has its BENEFITS! ;-)

**Ecclesiastes 4:9-12b** Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: 10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! 12b A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

**Prov 27:17** As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

1. "There is strength in numbers"

**Vance Havner** : "Snowflakes are frail, but if enough of them get together they can stop traffic."

**African proverb**: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you ant to go far, go together."

### B. The New Testament MODELS small groups (Acts 2 and...)

**1. 58 "one another" commands** ñ how to act in fellowship

**John 13:35** By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

**Romans 14:13** Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

**Romans 15:7** Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

**Col 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

### C. Conclusion: Don't become a spiritual orphan - join a SG today!

### D. Pray

## IV. SG Zoo!