

Ministry Groups

(Part 3) – *The 3 areas of ministry we're ALL called to (various texts)*

10-18-09

Introduction

First two weeks – *The WHY of ministry groups*

- Why focus on ministry to others when we know everyone is asking, “What’s in it for me?”
- 3 Reasons
 - 1) God wants us to raise up God-centered, others-focused Christians, not self-centered, self-focused Christians. (Mt. 22:37-40)
 - 2) In God’s economy, focusing on ministering to others is not only what’s best for God and others, it’s what’s best for us as well. (Mark 10:42-45)
 - 3) Ministering to others is key to growing in Christ yourself.
 - a. Many think they can separate growing in Christ from ministering to others
 - i. Ex. from this week - moving to a larger church so you “won’t have to do anything”
 - ii. Understandable: flesh, too tired to grow
 - iii. Unbiblical – What can I get/give?
 - iv. Baby bird word picture – FEED ME, FEED ME!
 - v. Separate being fed from ministry to others and you’ll remain a baby bird forever

This week – *The WHAT of ministry groups*

- What are they going to be encouraging and equipping you to do?

Next week – *The HOW of ministry groups*

- How are they going to be encouraging and equipping you to do it?

Body

Ministry groups are small groups of 6 to 12 adults designed to encourage and equip you *to minister at home, at church, and out in the community* and thereby advance God's Kingdom by growing in Christ yourself and by helping others to do the same.

I. God has called all His children to minister AT HOME

a. We're called to feed ourselves

i. **2 Peter 3:18 (NIV)**

¹⁸ But grow in the grace and *knowledge* of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

ii. **2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, *beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image* from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

iii. We tend to not *make* time for this in our busy lives

iv. Jesus *made* time (Mt. 14)

1. John the Baptist beheaded (v. 1-11)
2. Hears of John's death and withdraws (v.12-13)
3. Has compassion on crowd and heals (v. 14)
4. Feeds 5,000, dismisses crowd (v. 15-22)
5. *Goes up on mountainside by Himself to pray* (v. 23)
6. Walks on water with Peter (v. 24-33)
7. Healed all the sick of Gennesaret (v. 34-36)

b. We're called to love our spouse

i. **Ephesians 5:22-25 (NIV)**

²² *Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.*

²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*

- ii. Our relationship with our spouse should be a reflection of Jesus' relationship with His bride the church.

- c. We're called to disciple our children
 - i. **Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NIV)**
 - ⁴ Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
 - ⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.
 - ⁶ These commandments that I give you today *are to be upon your hearts.*
 - ⁷ *Impress them* on your children. *Talk about them* when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.
 - ⁸ *Tie them* as symbols on your hands and *bind them* on your foreheads.
 - ⁹ *Write them* on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

 - ii. What a discipleship opportunity we have as parents!

 - iii. How do we "impress" God's comm. on our children?
 1. Have them upon our hearts
 2. Talk about them all the time
 3. Have them always before you and your kids

- d. We're called to care for our extended family
 - i. **1 Timothy 5:3-8 (NIV)**
 - ³ Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need.
 - ⁴ But if a widow has children or grandchildren, *these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family* and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God...
 - ⁸ If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

- ii. Jesus' example on the cross
 - 1. **John 19:26-27 (NIV)**
 - ²⁶ ... "Dear woman, here is your son,"
 - ²⁷ and to the disciple, "Here is your mother."
- From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

II. God has called all His Children to minister AT CHURCH

- a. We're called to be together
 - i. **Acts 2:42-47 (NIV)**
 - ⁴² 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.
 - ii. Why?
 - 1. **Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)**
 - ²⁴ And let us consider how we may *spur one another on toward love and good deeds.*
 - ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us *encourage one another--*and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
- b. We're called to learn together
 - i. ⁴² They devoted themselves to the *apostles' teaching*
 - ii. We're called to learn together in both large and *small groups*

1. Jesus' model (Mark 4 – parable of soils)

a. **Mark 4:33-34 (NIV)**

³³ *With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand.*

³⁴ *He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.*

2. Paul's model

a. **Acts 20:20 (NIV)**

²⁰ *You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you *publicly and from house to house.**

c. We're called to pray together

i. ⁴² *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread *and to prayer.**

ii. We're called to pray *with* each other

1. **Acts 1:12-14 (NIV)**

¹² *Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.*

¹³ *When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.*

¹⁴ *They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*

iii. We're called to pray *for* each other

1. **Acts 12:1-12 (NIV)**

¹ It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them.

² He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword.

³ When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

⁴ After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, *but the church was earnestly praying to God for him...*

¹² When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, *where many people had gathered and were praying.*

2. And not just in emergency situations

a. **Romans 1:8-10 (NIV)**

⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.

⁹ God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness *how constantly I remember you*

¹⁰ *in my prayers at all times;...*

d. We're called to protect each other

i. From false teaching

1. **Ephesians 4:14-15 (NIV)**

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

¹⁵ *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.*

ii. From sin

1. **James 5:16-20 (NIV)**

¹⁶ Therefore *confess your sins to each other* and pray for each other so that you may be healed...

¹⁹ My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and *someone should bring him back,*

²⁰ remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

e. We're called to serve one another

i. By giving to each other

1. **Acts 2:44-45 (NIV)**

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.

2. Certainly applies to time as well

ii. By sharing the gifts God has given us

1. We all have gifts and are called to use them

a. **Romans 12:4-8 (NIV)**

⁴ *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,*

⁵ *so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

⁶ *We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.*

⁷ *If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;*

⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

2. We are called to use them for the good of others
 - a. **1 Corinthians 12:7 (NIV)**

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given *for the common good*.

III. God has called all His children to minister OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

- a. We're called to do good works (what we DO)

- i. **Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV)**

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

¹⁶ *In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

- b. We're called to share our faith (what we SAY)

- i. **Acts 1:8 (NIV)**

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

- ii. **1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)**

¹⁵ 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,

Conclusion

Who is feeling a little overwhelmed by what God is calling us to do?
Does it seem impossible?

God's call to ministry IS POSSIBLE, BUT ONLY with His provision

- 1) He provides us with Christ's righteousness
- 2) He has provides us with the Holy Spirit
 - a. Will
 - b. Wisdom
 - c. Power
- 3) He provided us with each other

Next week – HOW being in a ministry groups will encourage and equip you to do what God is calling you to do.

- Sign-up TODAY if you're ready
- Next Sunday last chance

Call worship team up

- Come up for prayer during closing song
- Close in prayer