

## Circle-Up 4 – a growing circle: Deep & Wide

- GOALS & GUIDELINES:
- ICEBREAKER: Is it harder to make friends or keep friends?
- AGREEMENT PRAYER
- PRAISE
- SCRIPTURE READ

We need circles. We need community. We need friendship. **Q-** Remind us how God's Word shows us this is true.

From creation, we find in Genesis, God showed that mankind needed circles. We need a relationship both with God and each other. Jesus himself had circles and reiterated the importance of loving God and loving our neighbor. This has been proven true from the beginning, yet the world seems to be struggling with the simple concept. **Q-** What are some signs the world is struggling with community circles and relationships?

**Q-** How many people did Jesus have in His circle during his earthly ministry? (Scripture check! 12, 72, 500)

Jesus, an obscure carpenter's son from a tiny town, had a growing circle. His circle grew way beyond 12. **Q-** Who did Jesus allow in His circle? (Everyone!)

People would literally walk up to Jesus and He would allow them in His circle. Jesus would walk up to people and invite them into His circle. Jesus never said "no" to anyone who wanted to join His circle. He even allowed Judas in His circle. **Q-** For real! How challenging is the idea of allowing and even inviting people into a growing circle? Why? Talk about it..

Jesus had a growing circle. His circle was wide. His circle contained people from many walks of life. Fishermen, tax collectors, priests, demon possessed, lepers, the outcast, the rich... Jesus didn't just stick to one demographic. His circle widely covers everyone. **Q-** How can we do better at this individually and also within a Connect group?

**Q-** Jesus had many relationships, do you think he loved them all unconditionally? **Q-** Do you think he treated all his relationships the same? **Q-** Is it possible to love people, but treat them differently?

Jesus drew a large, loving circle, but he never treated all members the same. There were times where Jesus would confuse people with a parable and then reveal the meaning of the parable to a select few. Jesus had a circle of disciples, but seems to have an inner circle of 3 disciples – James, John, & Peter. The lesson here is that while Jesus has a wide circle, he also can operate at different depths with us.

**Q-** What does it look like to go deeper with Jesus? **Q-** What might it look like for you to go deeper with others?

Chris Fluitt talking here "I used to worry about how I treated people. I thought loving people the same meant treating people the same. I thought that it might be slighting others to do something for someone if I was not able to do it for all. Kinda like when the teacher used to say, 'you can only chew gum if you brought enough for the entire class.' The truth is, I don't have the time or energy to personally disciple EVERYONE in my circle, but I am able to disciple a few, or at the least, one. Our Church doesn't have the ability to help everyone financially, but we do have the resources to help a few or at the least, one. So here is a new thought to live by - **Do for the one what you wish you could do for everyone.**

We are a growing circle. We need to grow wide, but we also need EVERYONE to grow deep with at least one other person."

**Q-** Does anyone have something to add?

**Internal Question-** Is your circle growing? Are there some people you need to invite to Connect group? Are there some people you need include in your circle? Are you going deep with anyone? Are you making a disciple? Are you becoming a disciple? How will you change? Is there someone God is placing on your heart to go deep with? **{PRAY}**

**VISION-** Do for the one what you wish you could do for everyone. Go deep & wide.

(Prayer requests)

Sarah Fluitt & Sher (protection as she works at a Hospital)

Revival in our homes

Brandon & Emily Moore fam (Pregnancy pains)

Bland fam & Adams fam (Laid off – Finance)

Parks fam (healing and deliverance)

Blessing extended fam Pat, Bob, Diane, Cheryl

Keep Jesus our focus

Finances – everyone! Peace – everyone!

Pray for protection over each other. Claim God's Healing! !!

Pray for our city & nation & world.

# Goals and Guidelines

**1.** Grow in relationship with each other

**2.** Grow in relationship with God

**3.** Grow in number and multiply

- This is a non-denominational meeting where everyone's thoughts, ideas, and opinions are to be respected. Everyone is welcome and we encourage all to share their feelings.
- We will not argue or debate!
- We place God's Word as the highest authority.
- We all share equally in the ownership of this Connect Group, therefore we will all participate in hosting meetings from house to house on a weekly basis.
- We will be committed to attendance and arriving on time.
- When sharing, we follow 3 simple rules...
  - Stay on subject, Keep it short & Keep all comments appropriate.
- We will build confidence and trust with each other and become transparent.
- What is said in here stays in here. No gossip!
- Last but not least... We will invite others to our Connect Group!

**Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)**<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

**Matthew 10:2-4 (NIV)**<sup>2</sup> These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; <sup>3</sup>Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup>Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

**Luke 10:1 (NLT)** The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit.

**1 Cor 15:6 (NIV)** *A resurrected Christ* appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

**VISION-** Do for the one what you wish you do for everyone. Go deep & wide.