

Wade Allen

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Pastor of Family and Worship

John O'Connor

Pastor of Community Engagement

Ron Fields

Pastor of Senior Adults & Care Ministries

God's PRIMARY Plan for Discipleship

David McEuen

Pastor of Family and Worship

God LOVES families. In fact, when God created the universe and everything in it, the only thing that He described as, "not good," was that Adam was alone and thus He created Eve and then gave them the commandment to fill the earth. Translation: Start a family.

Why? Because God loves the family and has designed it to be the primary means of discipleship for children and teens from generation to generation. Look at the instruction God gave the people of Israel as they were about to enter the Promised Land:

⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, *emphasis added*)

After instructing the people to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, and strength, He then instructs parents to instill this same love and devotion in their children. God understood His design. He knew that the family is the ideal place for discipleship and so He charged parents with the role of teaching their children about who God is and how He delivered them from Egypt. God's plan for the family has not changed. God desires that parents be the primary people to teach their children about who He is, what He is doing, and what He wants to do in their life. And we want to help you!

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

Beginning April 4th, we'll be offering families a weekly devotional designed to tie into our upcoming series, Essential Elements of Life in Christ. Each devotional will focus on one of the Elements from the series and provide a passage of Scripture

that you and your family can focus on throughout the week. Each lesson will feature a memory verse, Bible passage to read together and an activity or discussion questions based on the age of your children. Though there will be one devotional offered per week, the content can be spread throughout the week or completed in one sitting according to your discretion. My hope is that this will equip you to fulfill God's plan for the family and enable you to talk of Him, "...when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me.

And He Called the TWELVE Together

John O'Connor

Pastor of Community Engagement

I am super excited what God has done through our Community Groups, and hopefully this has been a blessing to you as well.

We are approaching the end of the second session of Community Groups, which was our Winter Session. For our Spring Session, we are not going to shake anything up on how we are meeting or where. We started community groups last fall, and are committed to seeing this through for a year before we make any major changes.

If you are looking to join a community group or know someone who would like to join, it is never too late. Please talk to your community group leader, or me, or Wade. We would love for you to get involved in group!

As we consider how community groups have performed this year, I would like for us to build on the things that worked and address the things that didn't work. If you are currently in a group, be thinking about what worked and what didn't.

To know if something is working, you first have to understand what its purpose is. There is a long answer and a short answer for the purpose of community groups. The short answer is spiritual transformation from a disciple of Jesus to a disciple maker.

If you'd like the long answer, David and Wade are genetically predisposed to help with that.



Think of Jesus' ministry, He would meet in homes of the sick and the sinful—not just for the fellowship, but loving them enough to speak the words of Love and Truth. Hopefully in your groups you have grown closer to one another, building up trust and love for one another.

While Jesus spent time meeting in large groups (see Matthew 5), there were times he would retreat to be with a smaller, more intimate group. It is rare that large groups can get intimate enough to enable each person to be "seen & heard". The ideal number that most Community Group leaders and directors recommend is twelve. The idea is that after a group reaches twelve members, people are easily overlooked either by accident or by their own doing.

For the Fall Session, we are going to look toward opening up other groups, locations and days—not only to accommodate other work schedules and living quarters, but also to get groups closer to twelve people each.

Thank you again for all of you who are going to groups, and a special thanks to the Hosts and Leaders of these community groups.

Think About It:

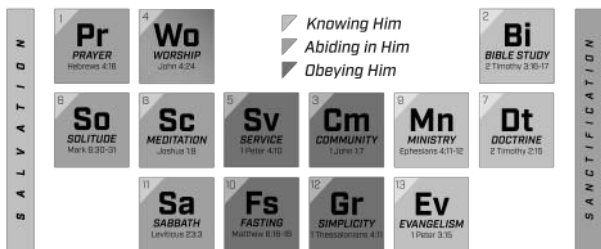
"Where would you be more likely to be open and honest?"

In a living room or a classroom?

With twelve people or twenty-five?"

*Quote from Sticky Church
by Larry Osborne*





Moving from Salvation to Sanctification

Wade Allen
Lead Pastor

We are quickly coming to the end of our study through the Book of Acts. This study began in January of 2015 and we have been coming back to this study annually or bi-annually for the past six years. More than forty messages later, we have completed this second volume of Luke. The plan at this time is to begin a study through the Gospel of Luke later this year.

On Easter Sunday, we will begin a new study that we are really excited about—Essential Elements of Life in Christ. Just as there are essential elements that make up and sustain life here on earth, there are also essential elements that grow and sustain life in Christ. The Bible tells us that we should move forward from our salvation to living a mature, spirit-filled life.

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age..." (Titus 2:11-12)

In order for that to happen, there are a few factors that must be present in a believer's life. This is what we are referring to as Essential Elements—such as prayer, Bible study, community, worship, service, and solitude—just to name a few.

(Continued in "Moving to Sanctification" on page 4)

Trusting GOD in the Littlest of Little Things

Ron Fields

Pastor of Senior Adults and Care Ministries

Hearing Aids are big ticket items. They are not cheap. I lost one of a pair once; and though they were insured, it cost a lot to replace it.

I took my trusty chain saw down in the woods and began work on a dead tree. My ear muffs (noise cancellation) came off, but I continued to work a while. Putting my saw back in it's place, I came inside to get ready to make a trip to town. While getting dressed, I discovered my right side hearing aid was missing!



I kept my appointment but the entire morning was continuous prayer. Norma was praying also and promising when we returned home she would get out our most powerful flashlight and shine underneath the leaves.

I went back to where my ear piece came off and kneeling began to lift leaves one by one from the ground. I finished a circle about three feet in diameter when on the edge of the circle, near my left knee, there it was!

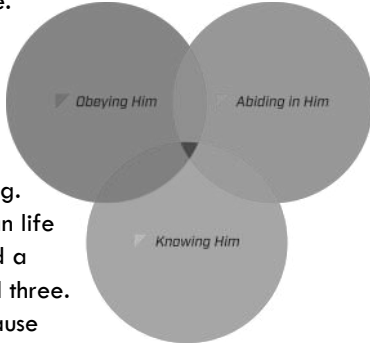
I came back in the house confessing my absolute unworthiness and praising God for allowing my eyes to see.

All my life God has been blessing beyond measure.

(Continued from "Moving to Sanctification" on page 3)

Each week, we will examine these elements from both Old Testament examples and New Testament teachings. We'll be exploring stories from the Old Testament such as: Cain & Abel, Noah & the ark, Abraham & Isaac, Moses & the parting of the Red Sea, and many more.

Each of these elements fall into one (or more) categories—knowing, obeying, and abiding. The growing Christian life requires that we find a balance between all three. An imbalance can cause problems on multiple levels.



Knowing + Obeying – Abiding = Legalist

Obeying + Abiding – Knowing = Heretic

Abiding + Knowing – Obeying = Hypocrite

Our goal in this series of studies will be to equip you to live a spiritual life that is growing and balanced. "So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding." (Heb 6:1 NLT)

This would be an excellent time for you to invite your friends and family to learn more about what it really means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Be watching for more information about efforts to reach out to our community in the next few weeks.

As is our custom, we will be providing you with several resources that will enhance this time of study. The Daily Recharge will focus on the practical side of implementing these essential elements in your life. Our Community Groups will be diving deeper into Scripture to discover more truths about these elements. And Pastor David will be providing our families with a resource that will guide them in Family Devotional Time at home. I hope you take advantage of every resource that will be available to you!



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