

Relationships

Toolbox for a Life of Faith



The Gift of Fellowship with Others in Small Groups:

Throughout the centuries, Christians have gathered in large assemblies for worship and in small groups for spiritual growth and mutual support. In our time, we are discovering once again, the power and joy of small groups. Disciples of Jesus can find their lives of faith enhanced by gathering in small groups to encourage and support one another on the faith journey.

A few important ingredients of small groups: common interest or goal (e.g. bible study, knitting, single parents, etc), confidentiality, honest conversation, spiritual growth, group prayer.

Have you experienced your life of faith enhanced by participation in a small group? What have you learned from your experience with small groups? How has a close friendship helped you to grow in faith?

Family: The family is a gift from God and is intended to be that place where children receive the kind love and care that God wishes for all. Our Family is also the place where faith is kindled and formed. How can we rediscover the faith center of family? Begin no matter what age the child is. First, pray for them, and pray for the lessons to be learned in life. Second, remind yourself that parenting is a wonderful and yet difficult expression of "letting go" love. Third, pray with your child. Fourth, read from the Bible to them and, as they grow older read it with them. Lastly, encourage your children to wonder about God and ask questions and never be afraid to say "I'm not really sure about that."

God can come to us in our relationships with family, with children or grandchildren. The call of the disciple is to relate to them for the sake of spiritual growth, both theirs and ours. How have you experienced faith growth in the midst of a family setting? How might you increase the role faith plays in your family setting?

Sharing Jesus with Acquaintances: I think that Christians are sometimes unwilling to witness to the Savior because they have allowed evangelism to become no more than a set of questions about a person's eternal welfare. The Christian joy we experience is more than salvation in the future. It is knowing Jesus and experiencing the fellowship of His people in the present. The disciple of Jesus knows that sooner or later there will come an opportunity to speak in His name. We also know that we are not responsible for what others do with our words. We are responsible for how we share and in what manner we speak of Him. Witnessing to Jesus is not hard, but it does require a spiritual readiness.

Evangelism is telling the good news of God's love and loyalty, forgiveness and grace to all humankind. How have you shared your faith with an acquaintance in your life? How might you be open to doing that in the future?