



SMALL GROUPS: ENGAGE IN CHRIST *John 17:20-26*

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Good morning church! We all have friends and people we see. We all have our group of people that we hang out with, spend time together, run together, work and play together. We all have a circle of influencers that cater to our perspectives, world-views, ideas and character. We all have influencers and you, whether you know it or not, are an influencer. If you were to create a list of Lost Friends, who would they be and would they be in your inner circle, your outer circle, or even on the chart? Also, consider making a list of your saved friends, now where would you place them?

Here in John 17 Jesus is surrounded by his circle of influence, we see the Lord's Prayer which is not the model prayer in Matthew 6, but here Jesus prays for His future Church! He prays for us at First Baptist Church.

John 17:20-26 says,

*"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, **21** that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **22** The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, **23** I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. **24** Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. **25** O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. **26** I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."*

1. The PATTERN of our Creator. (v 21-23)

- We have been invited to join in the mystery of DIVINE community.
- The FOUNDATION of our unity is desired by God.

2. The PLAN of creation. (v 24-26)

- God created us to ENJOY life in Him.
- God created us to EXPERIENCE life with each other.
- Jesus' method for reaching the multitudes was a small group of MEN.

WE ARE THE CHURCH!

3. The PRACTICE of the early church...

- Small groups were key to their SANCTIFICATION.
- Small groups were crucial to their MULTIPLICATION.
 - A. Small groups are BIBLICAL.**
 - B. Small groups are SIMPLE.**
 - C. Small groups are REPRODUCTIVE.**
 - D. Small groups are CROSS-CULTURAL.**
- We want to give ourselves to the most intentional ADVANCEMENT of the Gospel to the whole world.

So What Now? ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY

This week...

- Begin considering how you will get involved in a small group of the church.
- It will be some work to bring people who are different, have different backgrounds, personalities, and experiences to be a part of Small groups.