



CITY CHURCH

City Planning Participant Guide

Seven Principles of a Hospitable Community Group

I. The “Old Way” Wasn’t Wrong

- a. The Danger of Chronological Snobbery
 - i. According to CS Lewis, chronological snobbery is “the uncritical acceptance of the intellectual climate common to our own age and the assumption that whatever has gone out of date is on that account discredited.” (*Surprised by Joy*)
 - ii. Chronological snobbery leads to an overvaluation of new ideas at the expense of the old.
 - iii. Chronological snobbery can be applied to theological ideas as well as to church structures and culture (which are theologically based).
- b. Chronological snobbery is a major temptation for church plants
 - i. Since we have the opportunity to new things – it’s possible to overdo it. We don’t do or emphasize new things/ideas for the sake of being relevant and interesting.
 - ii. We do/emphasize new things and ideas to correct for blind spots (every generation has them), and to acknowledge contextual issues. This is why it’s important that Ryan and I, when we attend a conference where a new way of doing small groups is described, come back here and change everything.
- c. Hospitable small groups – not a “new” idea
 - i. Biblically rooted
 - ii. The principles I am about to describe may be unfamiliar, but they are not “the new thing” in church planting. These are tried and true.

II. Biblical Mandates for Hospitable Community Groups – Romans 12, Prov. 10

- a. Main idea: love one another with brotherly affection (Rom. 12:10a)
- b. Intentional listening – Rom. 12:15a, 16c; Prov. 10 (particularly v. 19-21)
- c. Honorable speech – Rom. 12:10b, Prov. 10 (particularly v. 19-21).

- i. Prov. 10 - When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent. The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; the heart of the wicked is of little worth.
- d. Concern for and attentiveness to the needs of others (Rom. 12:13, 15)
- e. Grace – Rom. 12:14, Eph. 2:8-9
- f. Welcoming Spirit (paying special attention to people you don't know and/or the lowly and the outsiders). Example of Jesus – Luke 19:1-10; Mark 2:13-17
- g. Vulnerability/Humility – Rom. 12:16, Phil 2:3
- h. Wisdom/Discernment – Rom. 12:16c

III. Our Context

- a. Rules before relationship
- b. Christians have it all together
- c. Desperate need for social cohesion

IV. Seven Principles of Community Group Hospitality

- a. CGMs (Community Groups Members) eat together during group and beyond
- b. CGMs speak well of others in the group.
- c. CGMs speak respectfully of ideas/beliefs that are opposed to the Christian faith or to your personal views on any subject.
- d. CGMs are vulnerable with one another (humble enough to speak of struggles/doubts/sinfulness/need for a savior). Requires discernment!
- e. CGMs speak openly about their needs, and other CGMs seek to meet them.
- f. CGMs are quick to listen. Don't dominate a CG! (Caveat – if you're naturally quiet, you may actually need to speak up).
- g. CGMs are welcoming to guests (we're a family with open doors).