

Living Grace-Fully: Fellowship
January 22, 2017
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:22-25 NIV)

Digging Deeper

Fellowship enables us to live grace-fully by providing us...

A place to BELIEVE.

- Hebrews 11:1 (NIV) tells us, “Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” The development of our faith is a process that can be either enhanced or diminished by the influence we allow other people to have on our lives. Is there someone in your life that has been an example of unwavering faith? Has spending time with them helped to strengthen your faith?
- How could it be beneficial to develop relationships with people who are in varying stages of spiritual development?

A place to BELONG.

- Fellowship provides a sense of belonging most of us crave in this modern day world that seems to be driving us toward a state of technology-based seclusion. It allows us to interact with others who share common beliefs and sentiments. Most importantly, we know it to be true from the verses highlighted above in Hebrews 10, that the practice of meeting regularly is pleasing in God’s sight. How has being in a life group, Bible study class, or some kind of Christian relationship benefitted your spiritual growth?
- You know the expression, “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink?” As in any new environment, you have to be willing to put yourself “out there” to a certain degree to discover where you are best matched with fellowship opportunities. When we begin to take ownership in the things going on around us, our perspective shifts from “them” to “us”. And when you and I become “us”, we BELONG! Do you feel a sense of ownership in the things that happen in your church, life group or community? Why or why not?

A place to BECOME.

- Proverbs 27:17 (NIV) says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” What if we adopted the concept that every Christian is a minister? How could that affect the fellowship of our local body? How has your life been “sharpened” by fellow believers?

Conclusion

Doing life together with other Christians enables to experience God’s goodness and live grace-fully as it provides us a place to believe, to belong, and to become. But it is a means of grace that we cannot utilize in isolation. We can read the Scripture alone and pray in solitude, but fellowship requires other “fellows”. So we all have a part to play and it’s why the writer of Hebrews talks about the appropriate actions using what is called the hortatory voice – “let us...”

If we want to see a change, we have to be the change. Step out on that limb and try something new this week that pushes you to grow in faith with like-minded Christians. You will be blessed and God will be glorified. It’s a win-win!