



www.
Western Hills
Church.com

BACK-TO-CHURCH BASH



Fall Kick-Off



Like



Listen



Follow

Back-to-Church BASH

Western Hills Church

Agenda

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 10:00-10:25am | Social/Light Breakfast |
| 10:25-10:30am | Dismiss Children / Find Seats |
| 10:30am | Service Begins |
| | Choir Special |
| | Welcome / BASH Info |
| | Worship and Giving |
| | Message and Workbook |
| | Team Discipleship Panel |
| | Next Steps |
| 12:00-1:15pm | Lunch / Visit BASH Tables and Stations |
| 1:15-1:45pm | Clean Up Facility |

Heart Stories

Relational Investment

There is an old yet famous saying that goes, “You will be the same person in five years as you are today except for the people you meet and the books you read.”

-Charlie “Tremendous” Jones

For all of us, our pasts have molded us and shaped us into the people we are today. However, some of us are blessed to have specific people who have invested into our lives with such intentionality and love that their investment completely transformed our very lives. This investment was not general like a book author, sermons from a pastor, or a public speaker. The investment was deeply personal and required significant sacrifice on the part of the one who made the investment.

Do you have a heart story?

Brandon Werner shared his story about how his spiritual growth was directly linked to the relational, intentional investment of his father (Greg), Luke, and Jonathan. After hearing that story, do you feel like you have ever experienced that kind of relational, intentional investment in your life? If yes, who were the people that invested in your spiritual walk that way?

If you haven't experienced that kind of investment, do you wish you would have?

Yes No

Is the Church Winning?

Church Decline Statistics – Latest Surveys (churchleadership.org)

- Every year more than 4000 churches close their doors compared to just over 1000 new church starts!
- Every year, 2.7 million church members fall into inactivity.
- From 1990 to 2000, the combined membership of all Protestant denominations in the USA declined by almost 5 million members (9.5 percent), while the US population increased by 24 million (11 percent).
- The United States now ranks third (following China and India) in the number of people who are not professing Christians; in other words, the U.S. is becoming an ever increasing “unreached people group.”
- Half of all churches in the US did not add any new members to their ranks in the last two years.
- Studies show that people most often leave the church due to feelings of abuse, disillusionment, or just plain neglect.

The church is losing in this culture because the church has drifted from its purpose. It isn't about weekend experiences, famous preachers, or modern worship and technology. The church of Jesus Christ is built on God's plan for the church to be in relationship with Him and with one another.

What is the Answer?

A Look at God's Word

Matthew 16:18

“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

-Jesus

According to Jesus, whose church would prevail against the gates of hell? _____

We are losing because we are not His Church. We have left His primary mission and strategy for our own ideas and traditions. If we are to stand as His Church, we must return to Jesus' **mission** and **strategy**...

The MISSION of Jesus for His Church...

“And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

-Jesus (Matthew 4:19)

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

-Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20)

Jesus' MISSION for His Church is to make disciples!

The STRATEGY of Jesus for His Church:

“He appointed twelve that they might be with him...”

-Mark 3:14

“Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

-Acts 2:46-47

**Jesus' STRATEGY for His Church is to make disciples as a team
in community and with love.**

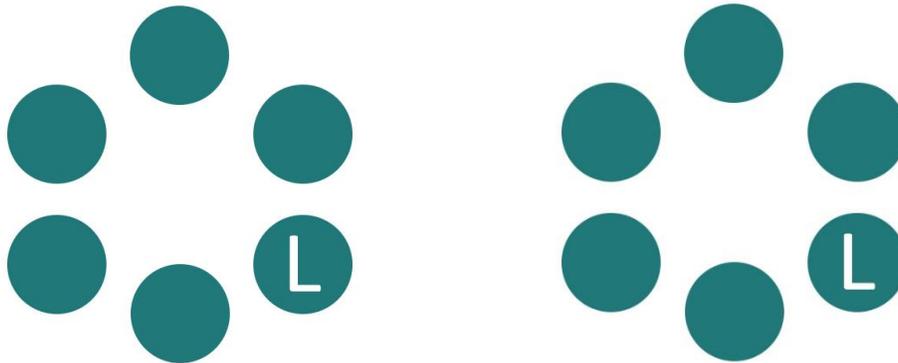
MISSION: What is Discipleship?

DISCIPLESHIP HAPPENS WHEN ONE FOLLOWER OF JESUS
HELPS ANOTHER PERSON GROW SPIRITUALLY.

The Bible teaches that every believer is called by God to be a disciple of Jesus. A disciple of Jesus is defined in Matthew 4:19...

Jesus said, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

By definition, a disciple of Jesus is someone who is on mission for Jesus. Again, the mission is given by Jesus in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 (see above).



God has called every person in His Church to be a disciple maker. If we call Jesus our Lord, we must be willing to surrender ourselves to make disciples. **By joining a group, you can immediately engage in God's mission for you to make disciples!!**

STRATEGY: Individual or Group?

Have you ever noticed that Bible figures do not have last names? Instead, they are most often identified by who their father was or by their geographical point of origin...

- Saul of Tarsus
- Jesus of Nazareth
- Mary of Migdal
- John, son of Zebedee

This is because, in Bible time culture, a person's identity was not primarily found in who they were individually, but rather by the identity of the group or groups with which they were associated.

Christian Identity?

Americans like to make a relationship with Jesus a very individualistic idea. Certainly salvation and faith in Christ is an individual issue, right? Consider the way Paul talks about it...

1 Corinthians 12:13

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

When you receive Christ, you do not merely become a new person. You are joined spiritually to a new group – the *one body*.

Philippians 2:12b-13

...continue to *work out your salvation with fear and trembling*, for it is God *who works in you* to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

We do not have an English word that makes “your” or “you” plural, but they are plural in the Greek! Therefore, Paul is literally saying “work out *y’alls* salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in *y’all* (you plural) to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”

What should we conclude? Yes, there are individual aspects of our walk with Jesus and our salvation. However, God did not design for our salvation, our walk with Him, or our church life to be primarily individual. God designed His Church to be relational...

Hebrews 10:24-25

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Hebrews 3:13

“But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called ‘Today,’ so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.”

Video: Jim Putman’s “I want Jesus; I just don’t want His Church”

STRATEGY: Relational Environments

As you have already seen, we believe in living life together *relationally*. Through relational environments, followers of Jesus and those who are seeking to follow Jesus can grow closer to God and to each other.

We define a relational environment as...

- A GROUP OF 3 TO 18 PEOPLE.
- A GROUP LED BY A MORE MATURE DISCIPLE (AN INTENTIONAL LEADER).
- A PLACE WHERE SAFE RELATIONSHIPS ARE BUILT AND PEOPLE CAN BE TRANSPARENT.
- A PLACE WHERE ACCOUNTABILITY, PASTORING, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND BIBLICAL TEACHING EXIST.
- FRIENDS REGULARLY MEETING TO SEEK AND FOLLOW JESUS TOGETHER.
- A PLACE WHERE THE BIBLE IS STUDIED AND APPLIED TO OUR LIVES.
- AN OPEN, WELCOMING PLACE WHERE PEOPLE CAN COME AND CONNECT TO GOD AND WITH OTHER BELIEVERS.
- **A COMMUNITY WITH A PURPOSE:** TO GROW AS DISCIPLES (FOLLOWERS) OF JESUS AND LEAD OTHERS TO FOLLOW JESUS.

Video: *Shallow Small Groups*

Guidelines: Review the guidelines for group discussions

Practicing a Relational Environment...

Practice fellowship and transparency. Answer one of these two questions in a discussion with your group. It is okay if you decide to pass...

- Have you experienced a great disappointment this week?
- What is the greatest emotional battle you are facing right now?

What does it mean to be “connected?”

We consider someone to be connected to our church when they are connected to relational discipleship through one of our groups.

In a group, each person has the opportunity to grow closer to Jesus and mature spiritually. Additionally, every person has the opportunity to engage in Jesus’ mission to make disciples through His strategy of discipling relationally with a team (the church). As a person grows as a disciple and disciple maker in group, other opportunities to serve and work as a team with our church will grow.

In a group you will...

- BUILD TRUSTING FRIENDSHIPS WITH OTHER BELIEVERS
- FIND A RELATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WHERE YOU CAN SHARE TRANSPARENTLY
- INSTANTLY ENGAGE IN JESUS’ MISSION FOR YOUR LIFE AND HIS CHURCH — MAKING DISCIPLES
- GROW IN YOUR WALK WITH JESUS AS YOU LEARN AND DISCUSS GOD’S WORD
- MEET AN INTENTIONAL LEADER WHO WILL ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AND HELP YOU GROW
- LEARN HOW TO BECOME A MORE EFFECTIVE DISCIPLE MAKER & TEACH OTHERS TO DO THE SAME
- ENCOUNTER OPPORTUNITIES TO FURTHER CONNECT (GIVE, PRAY, SERVE, ETC.)

**THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY PRIMARILY TAKES PLACE IN OUR GROUPS.
WHEN YOU ARE CONNECTED TO A GROUP, YOU ARE CONNECTED TO RELATIONAL
DISCIPLESHIP AND TO JESUS’ CHURCH!**

Next Step: You're Invited

- **Join a Group** – get connected to a group of Christians where you can be discipled and make disciples
- **Grow Spiritually** – commit to be transparent with your group for the purpose of overcoming sin issues and growing spiritually
- **Continue Your Learning** – join us for our 102: Membership Class by signing up at the development course table after the service
- **Get More Connected** – visit the stations after the BASH and look for ways you can get involved and serve with our church