

Community Group DNA

It's important for CGs *not to* be built upon/around a personality, an age group, an ethnicity, a common interest (music, creativity, life goals, motorcycles, etc.), or a stage/phase of life (singles, seniors, etc.). Rather, CGs must be built around a gospel DNA that puts on display the manifold wisdom of God in Christ (**Eph. 3:10-11**). The gospel is *compelling* to the watching world (and even to the spiritual realm - "rulers and authorities") *because* it unites people who would otherwise, by worldly standards, be completely divided.

1. **Multigenerational.** Every CG should *seek to be* a microcosm of the whole church. When we hear someone say, "I get to hang with *my people* on Wednesday night at CG,"- the "*my people*" should increasingly be a *reflection of the whole body* - including those who don't think just like me, those who don't look just like me, and those who are not the same age as me... and yet, we all are growing to treasure the same Christ who has saved us from our sins and united us to Himself. CGs are a wonderful context for Titus 2 relationships to flourish where *the older saints can pour into the younger*.
2. **Love.** *Gospel* love is powerful (**Jn. 13:35**). Gospel love is different from worldly love. Worldly love is typically extended when someone *treats me well*, or when someone *can benefit me*. But gospel love is extended *even when* it's costly and sacrificial. It pursues the good and interests of others above our own interests and extends costly forgiveness when we are offended and hurt by others. This is the love that Jesus modeled for us (**Phil. 2**) and the love that is truly powerful and compelling in a self-centered world.
3. **Interdependence.** Theologically speaking, no member of a church can operate purely independently. This is powerfully on display in passages like 1 Corinthians 12. This seems counterintuitive in our modern, individualistic context, but *interdependence* is what you find in the church *from the pages of Scripture* (see. Rom. 12:4-21). CGs help remind us weekly that *in the church of the Lord Jesus* - no man is an island.
4. **Accountability/Commitment.** Our church covenant calls us to consistent involvement in a small group. CGs must work to develop a culture where members reach out to check on those who have not been present. So, taking attendance in these groups is important. Being able to see attendance in these groups (through Fellowship One) will help pastoral staff care for and keep track of members as well.
5. **Spiritual Care.** CGs are a great context to "speak the truth in love" (**Eph. 4:15**) to one another. We are *all* called to *grow up into Christ* (**Eph. 4:15**) - to incrementally become more like our Savior, and church leaders empower and equip the *membership* within each CG to be a part of this ministry to one another (**Eph. 4:12**).
6. **Honesty/Authenticity.** CGs, if they are going to be healthy, must *fight* to create a culture where members open up their lives and hearts to one another. Community Groups cannot feel superficial. Paul modeled this well in places like **1 Thes. 2:8** and **2 Cor. 6:11-13** saying that he didn't just share the gospel with the Thessalonians, but he also shared "*his own self*" with them because they had become "very dear" to him. His heart was "*wide open*" to those he served as an expression of his love for them. These groups must feel the same.
7. **Missional.** Jesus said in **John 13:35** that the lost world will know that we are His disciples "by our love for one another." Gospel community is wonderfully evangelistic. It puts on display the supernatural power of God in the lives of ordinary people who are united to Jesus. These groups must cultivate a heart for the lost world and seek to invite unbelievers into these groups to observe our "love for one another" and to hear the glorious gospel that saves. CGs are wonderful places to invite lost people who often are skeptical to show up at a church building on Sundays. This *missional reflex* also shows up when these groups are asked to multiply in order to make room for new members coming into them. Prayer for the lost should regularly take place at CGs, and also prayers for our FBI mission partners around the world.