

The smaller groups in our church community are inside our homes where we go deeper, build friendships, and walk out the Christian life with each other.

HOME CHURCH GUIDE

- + "Breaking the Ice" question (group facilitator)
- + **CHECK-INS:** Introduce, check-in
- + **CARE:** Needs in the group
- + **COMPASSION:** What is the group planning? Are you inviting your neighbors to join in?
- + **GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS** Church-wide, group-only
- + **DIG IN:** Discuss questions as a group
- + **END AND HOMEWORK:** Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: NOTE these are a guide. If there is good conversation going around - pursue that discussion!

1. What are the most important "markers" or "fruit" of a life that is following Jesus? Curious about Jesus or rejecting/ignoring Jesus?
2. What do you think of these two approaches? What are the benefits or dangers of both? Where else do you see these types of sets in nature or society? Do you think a bounded-set church can become a centred-set?
3. Read these passages and reflect on them as a group: Matthew 23:1-24,*13; 1 Timothy 4:3-5; 2 Timothy 4:6-8.
4. Paul has no problem talking about his works for Christ empowered by the Spirit working in him. NT Wright says, "But he is still clear that the things he does in the present, by moral and physical effort, will count to his credit on the last day, precisely because they are the effective signs that the Spirit of the living Christ has been at work in him. We are embarrassed about saying this kind of thing; Paul clearly is not." What does this say about a boundary line vs movement approach to the Christian life?
5. The Pharisees during Jesus' time were obsessed with the boundaries, the markers of who is in the covenant and faithful and who is not. Jesus intentionally violated their boundaries. What does this tell us about the power of the Gospel?
6. A centre-set approach requires a well-defined centre. What does that mean for us as a local church?

PRAYER REQUESTS:

WHERE'S THE LINE?

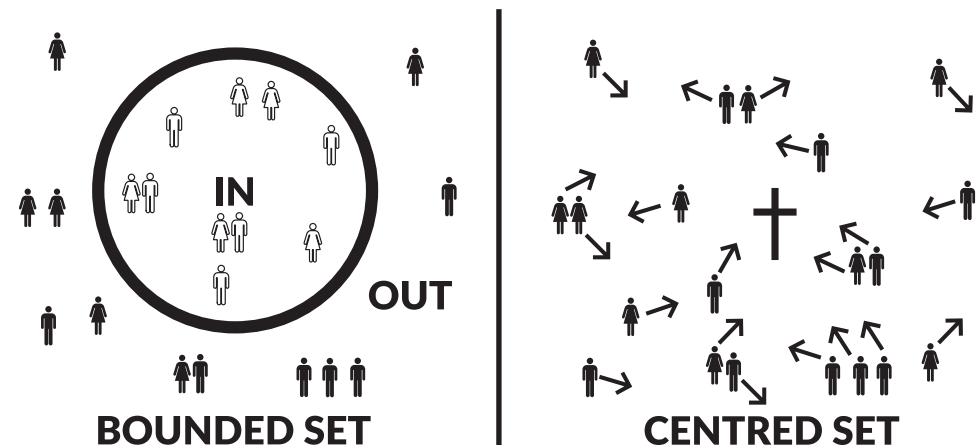
Matthew 23:13

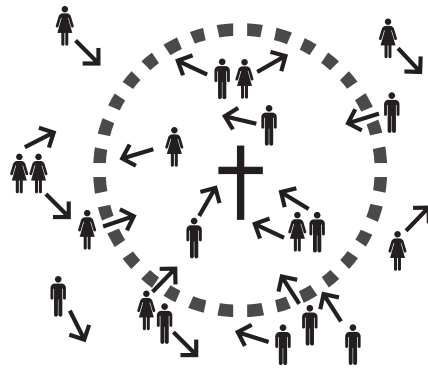
1 Timothy 4:3-5

2 Timothy 4:6-8

CS LEWIS:

"[The] situation in the actual world is much more complicated than that. The world does not consist of 100% Christians and 100% non-Christians. There are people (a great many of them) who are slowly ceasing to be Christians but who still call themselves by that name: some of them are clergymen. There are other people who are slowly becoming Christians though they do not yet call themselves so. There are people who do not accept the full Christian doctrine about Christ but who are so strongly attracted by Him that they are His in a much deeper sense than they themselves understand..."





MODIFIED SET

FROST AND ALAN HIRSCH:

“The attractional church is a bounded set. That is, it is a set of people clearly marked off from those who do not belong to it. Churches thus mark themselves in a variety of ways. Having a church membership roll is an obvious one. This mechanism determines who’s in and who’s out. The missional-incarnational church, though, is a centred set. This means that rather than drawing a border to determine who belongs and who doesn’t, a centred set is defined by its core values, and people are not seen as in or out, but as closer or further away from the centre. In that sense, everyone is in and no one is out. Though some people are close to the centre and others far from it, everyone is potentially part of the community in it’s broadest sense.”

We believe that a centred-set church must have a very clear set of beliefs, rooted in Christ and his teaching.

With centred sets, the key question is whether I am oriented and moving toward the centre or moving away from the centre. I’m defined by where I am, and where I’m moving, in relation to the centre.

If we focus on Jesus as the centre, then the key question becomes whether someone is oriented toward him or away from him.
This is a mindset shift for Christians

SIN AND SPIRIT-EMPOWERED OBEDIENCE (HOLINESS)

NT Wright: “When Paul refers to ‘the gospel’, he is not referring to a system of salvation, though of course the gospel implies and contains this, nor even to the good news that there now is a way of salvation open to all, but rather to the proclamation that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth has been raised from the dead and thereby demonstrated to be both Israel’s Messiah and the world’s true Lord. ‘The gospel’ is not ‘you can be saved, and here’s how’; the gospel, for Paul, is ‘Jesus Christ is Lord’”

It is a royal summons to submission, to obedience, to allegiance; and the form that this submission and obedient allegiance takes is of course faith.

NT Wright: Paul is still clear that the things he does in the present, by moral and physical effort, will count to his credit on the last day, precisely because they are the effective signs that the Spirit of the living Christ has been at work in him. We are embarrassed about saying this kind of thing; Paul clearly is not.

WHERE’S THE LINE?

+ Outer lines do not _____

+ Spirit-empowered _____

+ Lines that indicate direction, (arrows) matter

+ The finish line matters - the centre

+ Which way are you pointed? The arrow of your heart and mind can be turned toward Jesus this morning.

Will you accept his declaration of Lord and turn towards Him?