

MISSION CRITICAL

By Ben Stokes

SCRIPTURE

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.

OBSERVATION

“Get in a Life Group.” “We are a people of commitment, so if you want to be a member at Harmony Hill you must commit to a Life Group.” “If you want to experience Life you have to join a Life Group.” How many times have we heard Pastor John say something to this effect? Why does he believe Life Groups are so mission critical? It is a valid question.

Hebrews 10 provides us with the beginning of the answer. In verse 23 the writer of Hebrews explains to us how Jesus had torn the curtain that previously stood between mankind and God’s presence. He did this by entering into the most holy place armed with His blood and paying the price for our sins. We can now enter into God’s presence!

Then in verse 24, following this magnificent truth, we read, “So let’s encourage each other, meet with one another, stir up one another to love and do good works.” The correlation between verses 23 and 24 has huge implications for how we experience biblical community.

Biblical community begins with our personal relationship with Jesus. Every one of us who are members of God’s kingdom has full access to God. As we spend time with God and grow in our understanding and love for Him, the natural by-product will be that we encourage one another to grow closer to God. We will strive to help others grow in their relationship with God, to fan the coals of their affections for God, stirring them to love and do good works as well.

The reason it is essential to be a part of a Life Group is because it is the very environment God uses for us to be encouraged in our own faith and encourage others in their faith. If we neglect community, we will become weaker, not stronger, and will be more susceptible to the flaming darts of our enemy. If you have found yourself struggling and are constantly up and down in your pursuit to know and enjoy God, immerse yourself in the Word and find shelter in community with your brothers and sisters of the faith.

OBEDIENCE

- View the church with the biblical view of community as described in Hebrews 10:24-25.
- Join a Life Group if you have not done so already.
- Let your motivation for being part of a Life Group be learning how to glorify God by encouraging the people in this church. Don't let it be, "Okay how can I be served by this church? How can I go and attend the programs and have my needs met?" Go with the approach of saying, "How can I encourage people?"
- If you are a part of a Life Group, think of ways you can stir others up to love and good works, to help them grow in their relationship with Christ?"

Just imagine what would happen if our church body gathered together regularly with the motive to sacrificially serve and strengthen those who are part of the group? This is the very design for God's church.

PRAYER

Ask God to accomplish the following at Harmony Hill:

- Stir up one another to love and good works.
- Encourage one another in Christ every time we gather together.
- For community at Harmony Hill to be motivating and encouraging one another to grow in relationship with God and to make His love known in the world.
- For us to meet together regularly and not be casual in our pursuit of community.
- For us to come together with the attitude of Christ, not to be served but to serve.