

Starting a Cell Site

We often talk about gathering together with your cell site or home church. We encourage you to share these webcasts with them. We encourage people new to the faith to find a cell site or home group to become a part of and start to grow in their new Christian faith. We even encourage people to register their cell sites and home churches with us so we can stay in better contact and help you with prayer and advice when you need it. But we have never talked about how you start a cell site or home church.

Today we are talking about starting a cell site or home church. This will ultimately be the initial lesson in a future online learning course we are putting together about starting and leading a cell site or home church. We didn't want to wait until we got all of that built before we shared these lessons we have learned over the years.

Together, we have decades of ministry experience on all levels. We have been part of large churches and small churches. We have been part of mainline large denominations and have been involved in non-denominational para-church ministry work. We have been on staff and led ministries in large organized conventional churches and led small congregations in conventional churches.

About 10 years ago God started to stir our hearts with regard to ministry. We were not satisfied with what we were doing and the little impact we were having on the world while working within the confines of the conventional church. There were many things that were good, but we also saw things that were more inward-focused and meant to serve and support the organization more than the people that made the organization or the global body of Christ. We sought the Lord for wisdom and guidance. We looked to the Bible for direction.

After much prayer, counsel with trusted brothers and sisters in Christ, and hours of study in the scriptures, we decided to start Cell Life Church. During all of our time in prayer and study one of the things we believe the Lord showed us was how much of a machine the conventional church has become. Please do not misunderstand us. The conventional church is great and has a very distinct purpose. However, we believe the conventional church is not the model that Jesus started and is not the best way to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the world.

There are several pieces of scripture that we kept circling back to. Each of these we have spoken about many times on Cell Life Church Live and will continue to share them and refer to them. The first is Hebrews 10:24-25.

(24) And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, (25) not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

We knew we did not want to be lone rangers. God rarely calls anyone to go out alone. We need constant Christian fellowship to encourage one another and to sharpen one another. We read in Proverbs 27:17, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." It is so dangerous to go out alone.

We also did not want to be critics of any group that was doing their level best to serve God and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with others. However, we were dissatisfied. We wanted to get back to what



Jesus started. We wanted to get our focus off of policies and procedures, office hours, bylaws, meetings, attendance records, and budgets. We wanted to not focus on paying mortgages and salaries and build the Church, the Church of Jesus Christ, the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth.

This led us to examine the current conventional church model. We looked at all sorts of models. They all settled into basically the same thing. A corporate time of worship that was sometimes more of a concert focused on the band and singers more than the Lord. A giving time that often had a need to maintain or grow the building. Finally, a college-like lecture, or sermon, where everyone is sitting in rows, much like a class, listening to a person teach on a particular subject or passage of scripture.

Please, do not misunderstand us. None of these things are bad. However, they don't always point to Jesus, and often can cause our focus to shift from Jesus to the needs of the organization. If you are still with us, you more than likely feel the same way or have seen the same thing.

We turned back to the scriptures. We wanted to know the purpose of the church in general and how we were to conduct ourselves. We turned to a passage of scripture which is a cornerstone piece for us. It is found in Matthew 25:34-40.

(34) "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. (35) For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, (36) I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' (37) "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? (38) When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? (39) When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' (40) "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Whatever we did, whatever we started had to be centered around being the hands and feet of Jesus. We knew it could not only be about the act of gathering together. That was secondary to serving others. We also were drawn to Ephesians 4:11-12.

(11) So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, (12) to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

When we gather together it is not to listen to a band play and singer sing. It is not to hear a great sermon from a preacher or teacher. We come together to spur one another on. The people God calls to lead us must be servant leaders who equip everyone to be the hands and feet of Jesus. It is not about the eloquent speaker each week at the mega-church that has something to say that stirs me. The leaders are no higher or closer to God than anyone else. They are called to equip others to be the hands and feet of Jesus. They are supposed to teach and encourage everyday people to get out there and share the love, grace, forgiveness, and mercy of Jesus with everyone they come in contact with.

We started Cell Life Church for that very reason. We wanted to bring people together to do that. We wanted to encourage people to share Jesus with others. But we knew we had to meet together. What did that look like with Jesus? Acts 2:42-47 says:



(42) They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (43) Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. (44) All the believers were together and had everything in common. (45) They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. (46) 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, (47) praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

They came together often, not just at 9:00 am on Sunday. They did life together. They were in each others' homes having meals together, praying together, supporting one another, helping one another, and sharpening one another. That's what a cell site or home church does. They met together often. They spur one another on to do good deeds; good deeds in the name of Jesus Christ. They encourage one another and lift one another up. They eat together, laugh together, and cry together.

Back to the original question, "How do you start a cell site or home church?" The first part is understanding the reason why you are forming it. It cannot be out of rebellion or disagreement. When we separated from the mainline denomination we were with and started Cell Life Church, we had trusted Godly friends that we shared with and were praying for us and offering us counsel.

Once you know you are starting it because you want to see the power of God working in and through you and you realize that sitting in rows week after week just isn't enough for you. This is when you know it is time to join a new movement of God or start something, and a cell site or home church may just be the thing.

The second thing is finding a few more people who feel the same way and see the same thing and start to gather together and pray. Pray for the Lord to lead you and speak to you. Pray that he keeps you from making it about yourself or not about somebody else. It must be a gathering for Jesus, focused on Jesus, celebrating Jesus, and being the hands and feet of Jesus.

As the Lord gives you vision and direction on how, when, where, and what to do in being his hands and feet, do it together as a group. Reach out and clothe the naked, feed the hungry, raise money for clean water for Africa or food for widows and orphans around the world, and so much more. Find how your group wants to serve together and do it.

Don't stress over who the leader is. There doesn't need to be one. You can discuss and make decisions in community. Someone will eventually rise and fulfill the leadership duties that need to be fulfilled. Leave everything else to the Lord.

Gather together often. Gather over supper, lunch, breakfast, whatever. Gather for dessert or over snacks. Gather together and pray for one another, listen to one another, help one another. Read the Bible together, pray together, sing together, laugh together, and more. Build what we like to call unfiltered friends. Friends that you can be yourself around. You can fully let your hair down, so to speak. This doesn't happen overnight, but it will.

This is a cell site or home church. You may feel uncomfortable, especially at first, being organic like this. That's okay. If you are looking for conversation starters, these webcasts or our prepared Bible Studies available for free on our website may help you get things started. The most important thing is to come



together and sharpen one another and spur one another on to serve others in Jesus' name and help draw each other closer to the Lord.

Finally, if you like, you can register your cell site with Cell Life Church. There is a simple form on our main website at www.celllifechurch.org that allows you to register your cell site or home church. This allows us to better communicate with you and help you on your journey.

It really is that simple. You don't need a building or anything. You just need people to come together in the name of Jesus and celebrate him and share his love with others.

