



ABUNDACULTURE.ORG
PATHWAYS TO ABUNDANCE

THE HOUSE CHURCH

Resilient Christian Communities are built upon The House Church.

House churches can be structured in many ways. The following is the structure that we use as we build Resilient Christian Communities.

NOTES: In House Church everyone participates. There are no spectators.

1 Corinthians 14:26 and 29-31:

“When you meet together some will sing, another will teach, or tell some special information God has given him, or speak in an unknown language, or tell what someone else is saying who is speaking in the unknown language, but everything that is done must be useful to all, and build them up in the Lord... Two or three may prophesy, one at a time, if they have the gift, while all others listen. But if, while someone is prophesying, someone else receives a message or idea from the Lord, the one speaking should stop. In this way all who have the gift of prophecy can speak, one after the other, and everyone will learn and be encouraged and helped.”

Our House Church is small by design, around 12-15 members. The reason for this is that meaningful relationships take time. When everyone participates church usually takes 2-3 hours. People want and need deep relationships with others. For this reason the House Church often grows very quickly. One of the challenges of House Church is creating new churches when the church becomes too large for sharing from the heart. What feels like a problem can actually be an opportunity to create two House Churches where there had been one!

How Do We Do Church?

We begin by sharing a simple meal. (John 21:12 and Acts 2:42) This creates a relaxed atmosphere that is conducive to sharing. After the meal we gather as “the church”.

There are three basic steps:

1. **Checking in.**
2. **Listening to Jesus (Jeremiah 33:3 and John 10:27).**
3. **Paying attention to what the Holy Spirit is doing in the group.**

Checking In

During check-in each member shares for about three minutes what the condition of their heart is at that moment. We may use an acronym that helps us keep things brief. Here is a typical acronym:

Fearful
Angry
Tender
Happy
Excited
Refreshed

(The acronym above is just one example. The key is to find words that accurately describe the feelings of church members.)

After we share how we are feeling, we say “I’m in”. This is a cue to let others know that we are finished sharing. It also communicates that we are committed to this church, we are “in”.

Each one is encouraged to listen and take notes (especially for prayer requests). We do not give unsolicited advice, counsel or comments unless permission is given by the person sharing.

Listening To Jesus

After everyone has checked in, the group takes time to listen to Jesus. We often will break up and find a quiet place to listen to Jesus. We use about 10-15 minutes for listening before coming together again. Time is allowed for each person to share what he has heard.

Sometimes you will hear nothing, and that's okay. Sometimes you will hear a message for another member of the group. Some see visions, others may receive a song or a word of encouragement. Others may receive scripture to share.

Listening to Jesus is foreign to some people. It usually takes practice to discern His voice from our own or the enemy's voice. The book, "Four Keys to Hearing God's Voice" by Mark Virkler has been very helpful in developing this skill.

Great care is taken to assure that what we hear is indeed from Jesus or the Holy Spirit. We make sure that what we are hearing aligns with the Scriptures. We learn discernment and trust the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth.

Paying Attention To What The Holy Spirit Is Doing In The Group

Our goal in House Church is to know Jesus intimately and share Him with others. Discussion of what we are hearing from God often leads us to take action on what we are hearing.

We take time to listen to the Lord during the week and bring to the group whatever the Lord gives us to share. God may give us a teaching, or a song, or a scripture, or a prophecy, or a prayer, or an idea, or a video clip, or some artistic creation to share with the church. We come prepared to participate on some level. We are prepared to allow the Lord to do whatever he would like with His church. We ask the Holy Spirit to be our guide, our protector and our teacher. When we speak into each other's lives, it is done to edify, encourage and comfort. (1 Corinthians 14:3)

Other Building Blocks Of The House Church

- The smallest expression of the church is a church of two. (Matthew 18:20)
- Jesus promised to build His church. (Matthew 16:18)
- Jesus is the head of the church. (Ephesians 4:15 and 5:23)
- The Holy Spirit promises to lead us into all truth. (John 16:13)
- The body grows when members work together. (Ephesians 4:16)
- We practice the "one anothers" in scripture.
- We desire intimacy with our Lord and with His people.