



What's So Bad About Cliques?

- ♦ What do you think of when you hear the word '*clique*' or '*cliquey*'?
- ♦ Take a stance (agree or disagree) with this statement: "The disciples were a clique." Now defend your stance.
- ♦ Discuss the negative connotations of the term 'clique'.
- ♦ Discuss any positive possibilities that might come about through a 'clique'.

A homeless man once took interest in a church, he enthusiastically told the minister of his plans to join. The minister sought to deflect with the response, "That is great news. Let's both take some time to pray about this and ask God for guidance."

The next week the homeless man returned to the church and told the minister he had received a response from God.

"What did God say?" asked the minister.

"God asked what church," responded the homeless man. "When I told God," he continued, "God said, 'Oh no, not that church! You can't get in there. I know because I've been trying for years.'"

Let's face it... churches build strength in exclusiveness – but Christianity, at it's truest nature, is anything but! The message of "I am the Way" has turned into

"I *own* the way," even though the the whosoever themed message of the gospel is anything but exclusive.

- ♦ So, how do we proclaim 'our truth' without trampling on the beliefs or experiences of others?

A small group, or cell group ministry, by its very nature is cliquey. We want to create an atmosphere that allows for relationship and close community building. Isn't that a clique?

It seems to me that the biggest problem with a clique is that it becomes a closed group of individuals where few are allowed in. The problem, or should I say challenge, then becomes:

- ♦ How do we create a close-knit community that is not a closed-off community?

This does seem to be an ongoing issue within any church community. How do we build close relationships without becoming exclusive and uninviting?

Perhaps one of the best strategies is to acknowledge the fact that this is an ongoing issue – and determine to not let it be an issue.

Challenge: Can we, as a small group community, strategize a way to build relationships while remaining open to others who are seeking belonging in such a community?

Let's make it so!