

## **“Overview Of The Overhaul”**

Recently at the end of a sermon I said something to this effect: “I want to change how we go about the church.” What did I mean by this? Rather than keeping you hanging, I want to explain in this month’s newsletter.

To put it simply, I want to make 10-12 member Sunday morning and mid-week Bible Fellowships the center of our adult discipleship so they: Help enfold new people; encourage fellowship, community, and soft-accountability; help people grow in their faith; apply the Word of God; provide pastoral care; direct people into apprenticeships that fit with their gifts; bring people together in prayer; reach out to unbelievers as a team; and provide the “farm system” we need for future leaders.

Since we will put so much weight upon the Bible Fellowships, this necessitates some other moves: We will kick off this new emphasis with three sermon series tied into the Bible Fellowship groups over the next year. During each of these series our Bible Fellowships will all follow up on each sermon with discussion and also will have a book to cover that goes along with the series. Each of these series will provide “tools” we will need for fruitful Bible Fellowships. The continuity among groups, along with minimal additional material will also help with leader training and growing our groups to be better at all the components of the groups beyond teaching and learning.

Additionally, we will seek to grow our number of Bible Fellowship leaders, groups, and participants. We already have some new leaders and apprentices who have signed on and will be of help over the next couple of months in recruiting people for involvement.

Something else necessary will be to provide training for BF leaders. The training we will use is the same training used at the congregation where I was on staff in Fort Collins. So, it is not merely theoretical, but tried and proven.

Given that Bible Fellowship leaders and groups will carry so much weight and we will see more adults emerging from BF’s to serve in various ministry areas in the future necessitate that we provide ample training, oversight, and support for these future volunteers.

This need for training of BF leaders and others demands that we have elders who are focused almost exclusively on overseeing this process, providing training, coming alongside to support, and also providing any pastoral care that the groups cannot handle. As a result, one of the realities we face is that we will need to remove some things off the elders’ plate so they can give more oversight to this all-important ministry in the congregation.

That is the essence of the change or “overhaul” I am proposing. The beauty of it is that it is simple, it does not require the addition of a program, and it is an approach that does not add an inordinate amount of time requirements upon individuals’ and families’ schedules.

I covet your prayer support for these changes that I believe God will use to bless this congregation in a very significant way.