

# Fostering an Environment for Participation

Kirk Martin - Nov 20, 2011

**Let's look at the context** in which Peter writes... "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms"

**1 Peter 4:7 -11** The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. 8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

**The urgency of the day** - 7 The end of all things is near.

- In the last days perilous times will come (2 Tim 3:1)
- In the last days I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh (Act 2:17)

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

**The necessity of prayer** - Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

**The environment of love** - 8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

John 13:35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

**The love for strangers** - 9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

- Every one of us was a stranger at one time
- Jesus ministered to strangers - we are called to do the same
- The dynamic of Acts 2 was created in part because of the love for strangers  
(3000 came from other parts of the world into Jerusalem - 120 cared for them)

**The call to faithfulness** - 10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

- 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
- 1 Corinthians 12:7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.
- 1 Corinthians 12:11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

- 1 Corinthians 12:18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.
- 1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

**The dependence upon God** - 11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides

2 Corinthians 5:17-20 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

**All for the glory of God** - so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

## How we can foster an environment for participation

### 1) A focus on the equipping nature of the five-fold ministry which can create an entrepreneurial spirit

Ephesians 4:11-13 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

### 2) Remind each other of God's purpose and calling He has a purpose for your life

Jeremiah 1:5-10 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." 6 "Ah, Sovereign LORD," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child." 7 But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. 8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD. 9 Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth. 10 See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."

### He has work prepared in advance for you to do

Ephesians 2:8-10 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

### 3) A Commitment to Teaching, Fellowship, Breaking Bread & Prayer

Acts: 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship ***[participation]***, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

**One way these commitments can be fulfilled through more and varied small groups.** Teaching groups, participation groups, breaking bread groups, prayer groups. Small group environment moves more people into leadership, participation and involvement. ***NOTE:*** There are people talking about missions, about evangelism, about teaching the women, about raising up leaders, about serving in our community, about prayer, about visiting the sick, etc I heard lots of testimonies last week that encouraged me because it showed that a lot of us are engaged in the lives of others we are reaching out to make a difference.