

# House Church Fellowships

by Chuck Missler

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of home fellowships as a more effective and persecution-proof way to grow and mature as believers, led by the Holy Spirit.*

**Duration:** 11:22

**Scripture:** Acts 2:1

**Topics:** "Church Structure", "Holy Spirit"

---

## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of returning to the basics of the church as seen in the New Testament, focusing on the simplicity, authenticity, and effectiveness of home fellowships. It highlights the early church's meeting in houses, the benefits of small groups for personal transformation and accountability, and the role of the Holy Spirit in leading gatherings. The sermon also addresses the historical context of church structures and the need to learn from history without being shackled by past errors.

---

## Transcript

It is today, so it's a call to get back to basics. What is the church? Nothing that we've said so far this morning comes close. The church is the secret and powerful society of the redeemed.

That's what it is. It's a place where people can literally see the body of Christ, not simply touched by an abbreviated gospel of evangelical blitzkrieg of short duration. A guy comes to town, he's very articulate, he's got the things, and we have a crowd get together and a lot of people come down and make a commitment.

And then what happens? Less than one or two percent are in church a year later. No, we want to return to the New Testament, simplicity and its authenticity. That's what we're here for.

You have spent money to come here to this conference and you've traveled a long way. And what is the call? To get back to basics. That's basically it, what we're going to deal with here.

But that may surprise you in what way. And there are no models. I'm going to show you one model, but it's not quite the same thing.

Let the Spirit lead as He wills is really the banner that we want to fly here. How did it all started? A group of 12, a group of 12 along the seashore. That's where it started.

The birth of the church itself was in a house at Pentecost. That was in a house, believe it or not. Acts 2, check it out.

The early church always met in houses and in your notebook there, there's a whole list of these verses. You don't have to jot them down. They're in your lap with your workbook.

Check them out. It's a very, very insightful discovery for many. And as a persecuted church, which it was, even before the resurrection, they were in closed doors, terrified.

It was the only safe way to meet then and it's going to be again. Some of us already are beginning to see the pinch of neighborhood restrictions or what have you that's coming, not just in America, all over the world. The home church is the survivable one.

Home fellowships, that was the original form of fellowship. All instances of the book of Acts were in homes. Formal churches, as we think of them, were invented in the third century by the state.

Home fellowships were ostracized by the medieval church, of course, under penalty of death, by the Reformed churches. After the Reformation, the same kind of power grasping occurred among our venerated leaders. And to this very day, many churches try to stamp out home studies or twist them or somehow regain what they feel is a loss of control, really.

So obviously home churches are also, the reason we're emphasizing all this, isn't only because it's more effective anyway, but it's also the only viable form for a underground church. One of the reasons that we are meeting is because we believe that all of us in this room increasingly will experience, as the years take off, increasing restrictions in our ability to worship, our ability to fellowship, yes, and even our ability to pray. In America, it's illegal to pray in public, or try anyway.

The advantage of small groups, disciplined multiplication, when a group gets more than 12 or 20, whatever, split into two. That's called mitosis. It's the most effective form of biological growth is mitosis.

And it's free of any growth barriers. There's nothing that prevents your group going from 12 to 20. But when it gets to 20, think about two tens.

See, that gets exponential when you start thinking about it. It's not linear, it's exponential. That's exciting.

And the participants are more involved. They're not in a spectator sport. If you're attending a group here, this, if it gets any larger, it becomes a spectator sport.

It's small enough here, when we have a break, we can ask questions of each other. Hey, what'd you mean by that? Oh, have you seen this? Or, hey, there's interaction. Can you imagine? You're participants, not spectators.

That's profound. That means there's more personal transformation and accountability. Yes.

A small group is fabulous for the new Christian because you can ask questions without embarrassment. But it also is better for the group because you're starting to be accountable, in a sense. And so it's more effective for new Christians, as I've mentioned.

It also solves the leadership crisis because you know who will lead in a small group? The Holy Spirit. Yeah, indeed. And that's exciting to watch.

It's exciting to have a group of people meet. You don't have to have a teacher. You need a leader to sort of keep things orderly, but you don't have it.

You put a DVD in the thing and listen for 30 minutes or whatever and talk about it. And watch what happens when the Holy Spirit takes over. Now, I have a group of 5, 6, 8, 10 people.

And when they leave, something will have emerged among them that no one brought into the room. An insight that the Holy Spirit emerged from the dialogue. And when you watch that happen and realize what happens, it blows your mind to realize there's an unseen presence of the Holy Spirit Himself by highlighting something that somebody didn't pre-plan to bring in.

That helps to have some preparation. Don't misunderstand me. But that also can be a straitjacket.

That's the danger of PowerPoint here. I've got a little package thing to get in within 50 minutes or whatever. You know, there's an advantage to that.

It's efficient. But if it's a springboard to further study, great. But it's also a form of straitjacket.

Because the Holy Spirit may have something He wants to bring up that wasn't anticipated in my stupid little slides. You know, the old thing we used to say in business is, Beware the pox, beware the ides, beware the man with the colored slides. Anyway, it's more biblical and it's also a persecution-proof structure.

And it's more efficient. There's no cost. You don't have to subsidize a professional hireling to lead your Bible studies.

Most of you know people that are fabulous leaders among you that are unpaid. Paul was, and so on. So, it's a way of life, not a series of meetings is one of our thoughts here.

The way is what it's called in Acts 18 and elsewhere. And there's no such thing as a house of God. That's a secular term, okay? And, you know, people say, God does not live in temples made by human hands.

Let's understand that. Well, they're chewing gum in the sanctuary. No, no, no, no.

Sanctuaries are chewing gum. We're the sanctuaries. He's indwelling us if we're regenerated.

There is no bureaucratic clergy in the New Testament. That's an invention in the third century. And no clerical mediators.

Clerical is the right term.

I was going to try to correct that, although I would say clerical, but clerical is also in the dictionary refers to a man of the cloth, so you don't, and the Nicolaitans was an idea that was adopted from pagan religions of course, and you also have line or staff, in an organization you have line people and staff people, staff people are not the productive ones, they may be part of a necessary part of overhead, but they're not productive, so what are you, let's us be productive, not overhead, so alternatives, well there is a role for megachurches, that's the big thing today, and I'm not here to disparage them, they have a role, there's a value there, and there's the local congregational church, I'm not here to disparage that, many people misunderstand my once and future church

presentations, they think I'm anti-church, not at all, I am pro-home fellowships, but I think they are the part that's essential, those are not, they're useful, I'm not disparaging them, but that's not where the action is, the small study group, and even more than that, I'm going to save the expositional study group and I'll come back to that, now one of the healthiest are cells that are sponsored by the local church, you have the best of both, and I was startled when the institute started getting a membership, I had people send emails, boy we sure appreciate the Coyne Institute, because we don't have to leave our church now, what's all that about, I found out by dialogue what they're talking about, they love their church, they love their pastor, they love the programs for the kids,

there's all kinds of reasons they like the church, they're frustrated because they're not getting taught, so by the institute being available on the internet, they can plug that hole, they don't have to leave their church to get taught and to grow, they get everything else they want, which is important, and so that combination is important, home fellowships is a key part of the picture, home churches if you will, there's a subtle difference, I don't think it's relevant, so I want to have candor here without malice, I'm not here to disparage anyone, I think we need to understand history for it's truth, but we're not with malice, there are critical assessments we need to continue to make, and that's what the seven churches letters are all about, Jesus is making a critical assessment, and so

the historical reality is both, Hegel said that history teaches us that man learns nothing from history, George Santayana said it another way, he that doesn't know history is doomed to repeat it, we need to understand that we want to, what we're trying to do with the institute is to get the best of the past and not shackle ourselves to the errors of the past, and that's part of what we'll talk about here in a minute, and there are roles for every variety of fellowship, and the idea of network sells, one of the things that I'm really convinced of in business as well as survival of the church is our personal network, you have a personal network of people you trust spiritually, you want to grow that, nurture it, and invest in it, you each need your own private network, where you can

fellowship with candor and comfort, so see small groups are organic, they're not organized, they just happen, they're relational, not formal, they're a persecution proof structure, they mature under tears, they multiply under pressure, they flourish in the desert, they see in the dark, they thrive on chaos, and the only boast they make is the lamb, or king, or the lion if you prefer.

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/pBRsU4J3h7E.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-missler/house-church-fellowships/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**