

Circle Up 2 – Better Together

Welcome to Redemption Church in Plano Texas. Hello to all our Live Streamers, our Podcasters, Youtubers, and however you are receiving this... We greet you in the name of Jesus! My name is Chris Fluitt.

Circle up

Last week we started a brand new sermon series called circle up. And since then the world here in the metroplex has gone crazy. The COVID-19 Corona Virus has caused a lot of panic. People have made runs on the stores.. and there have been actual fights over toilet paper & bottled water.

Our Government is recommending isolation. I really understand that. We do want to slow the rate at which the virus is spreading... BUT I need to tell you today that isolation is not good for us.

Times like these... with all the fear and uncertainty have reminded us that we do need community.. we do need connection. We need to find a way to have this connection without spreading the sickness.

In times like these I am so glad that I have a church family around me. I have people praying, encouraging, helping...

If anyone hearing me right now needs help.. let's connect.
If anyone is afraid and uncertain... let's connect.
If anyone needs help... needs prayer... let's connect.
Plano, Richardson, Allen, Dallas, Garland, Mesquite...
Wherever you are... LET'S CONNECT... Let's circle up.

We are Better together

Better Together

Some things just naturally go better together. If you are out there on live stream or are watching somewhere else leave us a comment of 2 things you think go better together.

- Milk & Cookies
- Peanut Butter & Jelly
- Biscuits & Gravy

- Paul, Ringo, John, & George – The Beatles
Dallas Cowboy fans... Troy, Emmitt, & Irvin... Jimmy Johnson & Jerry Jones...
- Shaq & Kobe... Jordan & Pippen
Captain America & Ironman... The Avengers...
Jim & Pam from The Office
- Your marriage – Guys you & your wife are better together...

Some things are better together.

In Mark 12 one of the teachers of the law, a religious Pharisee, brought Jesus a question. It is a complex question that likely was designed to try and trip up Jesus... But Jesus don't trip.

The question was... "Of all the commandments, which is most important?" Think about how complex that is... What would you do if I put you in the spot and asked you "of all the words of God, which words of God are the most important?"

Here is Jesus' answer in Mark 12:29.

Mark 12:29 (NIV2011) "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Mark 12:30 (NIV2011) Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

Jesus lets us know what is most important is a relationship with God. You and God... are better together.

But Jesus doesn't stop there.

Mark 12:31 (NIV2011) The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Jesus tells us that you and I are better together.

Better Together

There is nothing more important than circling up with God and each other. Through community we are BETTER TOGETHER.

The culture of the world is all about me.

- Selfies
- Be yourself
- Make yourself happy by buying yourself things
- You deserve more

God's Kingdom is all about US. His Kingdom is all about circles.

There are 59 verses in the New Testament that use the phrase "one another."

- Be at peace with one another (Mark 9:50)
- Love one another (John 13:34)
- Honor one another (Romans 12:10)
- Greet one another (1 Co 12:25)
- Serve one another (Gal 5:13)

Hebrews 10:22 (NIV2011) let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 10:23 (NIV2011) Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10:24 (NIV2011) And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,

Hebrews 10:25 (NIV2011) not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

V22 says – "Let US draw near to God"

Drawing near to God is better together

Through busy-ness, disappointment, through mourning, through rejoicing

V23 says "Let US hold unswervingly to the hope we profess"

Holding on to hope is better together

Life can be a mess.. We need circle up and hold on to hope together. Sometimes we need someone's help to hold on to hope.

V24 says "Let US consider how we may spur one another on toward love & good deeds."

Discipleship is better together

Discipleship... leading one another, teaching one another, serving one another.

There are Negative relationships, and positive relationships. You can be discipled by negative relationships, or you can be discipled by positive relationships.

Circle up with positive people who know something. They have knowledge to teach you... lead you, a heart to serve you... Someone who knows how to pray, how to share their faith, knows their Bible...

V25 says "not giving up meeting together."

Church is better together

Our worship is better when we are together. Our faith grows when we are together.

1 Peter 5:8 (NIV2011) Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

You have seen those national geographic animal videos where the lion is sneaking up on a herd of antelope. The Lion doesn't try to catch one of the antelopes in the center of the herd. The Lion always sets his sights on a lone straggling antelope on the outside fringe of the herd.

Your adversary the Devil is prowls around like a lion. He isn't jumping into the middle of the church, he is sneaking around to find someone isolated and unaware. BE ALERT! BE SOBER MINDED!

Don't be just near the church... be in the church! Be in the heart of the Church! Be in the center!

It is better for you and safer for us to be together!

Vs 25 says “encouraging one another.”

Encouragement is better together

It is so good when people encourage, strengthen, comfort. It is better!

There are times you circle up to receive encouragement, but there are also times where you are the one to give the encouragement.

One of my frustrations as a pastor is pastoring 2 kinds of people...

- The people who only show up when things are bad...
- The people who only show up when things are good...

Better Together

We live in a sad, sarcastic, separated world. Our churches can also be sad, sarcastic, and separated.

Last week I told you that Circles are greater than rows. The world does not need another church building with people sitting in rows. This hurting world needs the people of God spreading love & good deeds, circling our neighborhoods and schools... circling the lost and confused... circling the sick and depressed...

In fact Jesus lets us know that sitting on a Church row will never inform the world that You are a follower of Jesus.

John 13:34-35 (NIV2011) “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Circles are greater than rows!

Is anyone here today because of a church building brought you to faith?

Is anyone here today because of a church program disciple them?

Is anyone here today because the trappings of religion brought them hope and encouragement?

But is anyone here because some circled up with them and shared hope?

Is anyone here today because a faithful; blood bought Christian revealed to them that Jesus loved them?

Is anyone here today because a Sunday school teacher disciple them?

I'M HERE TODAY BECAUSE OF A CIRCLE!

Redemption Church we need to circle up. We need to turn our rows into circles.

Turn your row into a circle

Create a circle. Invite people into your circle.

There is a world that is panicked and afraid, they need the Church of Jesus to circle up around them and draw them near to God, help them hold on to hope, disciple them, and encourage them.

If you are going to turn your row into a circle, you must be willing to...

- Love people
- Serve people
- Provide for people
- Live out your faith – pray, believe, share the Gospel

If only the church would stop being a location with a brick and mortar building... and start being the people of God.

Today all most people can think about in the Corona virus...

We are about to have a time of prayer and talking to God... but first I want you to think about this virus.

We are told the virus started in Wuhan, China in January of this year. It started with a single individual who spread it to another and another, and then those who caught it spread it to another and another...

And what started with one person, has in around 2 months time, has spread 7,600 miles to our front door in DFW. It has covered so great a distance.

And what started with a single person has spread to no 167,700 people.

Church I don't mean to take lightly of this pandemic, but isn't it time for the Gospel of Jesus to spread like this?

Go Viral

Are you telling me that a micro virus is more transmittable than the power of God's Spirit?

Are you telling me that a cellular disease is spreading faster than the love of Jesus Christ?

Are you telling me that the news of Coronavirus is causing runs on grocery stores, but not running us toward prayer?

musician

This virus is not greater than God. It is time for the Church to go viral.

It is time for us to infect our neighborhoods with peace. It needs to spread to the homeless man who lives by a doomster and the C.E.O. who lives on the hill.

Do you have it?

...not the virus but the Holy Ghost!

...not the virus but the fire shut up in your bones!

...not the virus but everlasting life!

Acts 1:8 (NIV2011) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."