



BRANCHES

BIG THINGS HAPPEN IN SMALL GROUPS

discussion questions | September 14, 2014

sermon series

No matter how much we enjoy the weekend worship experience, sooner or later, we stop growing. That's because we need more than great music and engaging message. We need to connect with other people who are on the same journey as us. Learning we're not alone as we try to follow Jesus changes everything. That's what **Branches** is all about. In a **Branches** group, you'll find people who've been where you are, who know the joys and pains of building relationships, work and figuring out your calling, raising a family, and leaving a lasting legacy. They're people you can join with in figuring out exactly how the new life Jesus offers us changes our whole world. Becoming part of a small group is the single best way to pursue a thriving, life-changing relationship with God. This Fall, **Branches** Small Groups will replace all Wednesday Adult Education opportunities.

Branches groups will begin the week of September 28 and run through the week of November 16, for a total of 8 weeks. Branches groups meet at various times throughout the week, including on Wednesday evenings, when we have ministries for teens and children from 6:30-8:00pm.

Signing up for a **Branches** group is easy. Just go to bcnaz.com/branches and fill out the form. You can even sign up from your smartphone or tablet.

today

If we choose to be in circles with those who are different from us, we run into a problem: how do we react when those explosive issues arise? Whether it's abortion, gay marriage, alcohol, gun control, or something else, many issues can potentially divide the Church. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he advises them on a similarly divisive issue: when faced with division, choose love, not judgment. According to Paul, knowledge puffs us up, but love builds us up.

scripture for further reading

John 15:9-17; 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1; 1 John 4:7-21

discussion questions

1. When you're around people who don't see the world the same way you do, do you tend toward judgment or acceptance?
2. Love is a more difficult third way. What does that mean? How is love similar to both judgment and acceptance? How is it different from both?
3. For the Corinthians, eating meat sacrificed to idols was a challenging, divisive issue. But today, it's not something that divides American churches. Does this fact help you view our hot-button issues any differently?
4. Paul refuses to take a side when addressing the Corinthian debate over idol meat. What does this look like in today's hot-button issues?
5. How can you choose the difficult third path of Love this week?

