

## **Connect Group notes 23 June 2025**

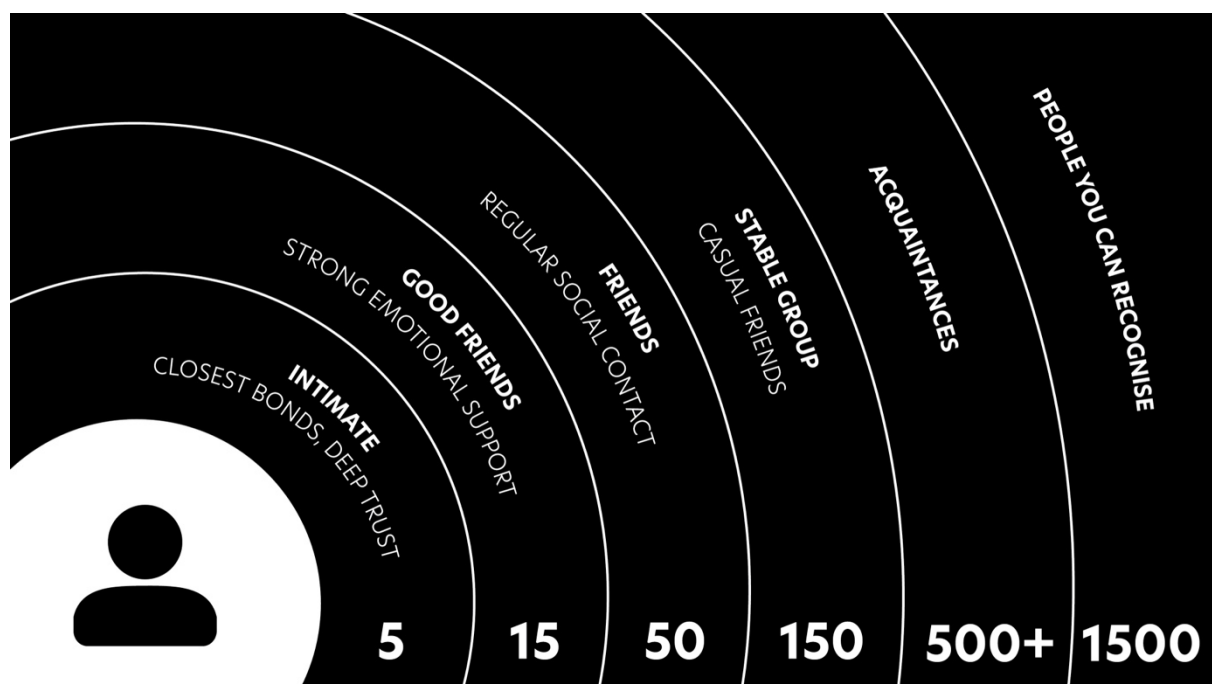
Jo spoke to us again on Sunday about community, and it's necessity for our formation as Jesus followers. Jesus wants to save and sanctify us and for us as his body to function like a family.

Read Mark 12:28-31 and Matthew 4:18-22

Jesus named 12 disciples (Matt 10:1-5) – this prophetically evoked the 12 tribes of Israel. He made it clear he wants his community to be like a family, embracing all the ups and downs of life, not just with easy people, but also with the ones we may not be drawn to in the same way.

Jo spoke to us about our capacity and responsibility in regards to this. She referenced Dunbar's number which makes it clear what we have capacity for in terms of the number of people we make room for in our lives.

Dunbar's Theory (redesigned by Petra Reid☺)



Jesus had his core group of people and also his close three.

He began his ministry with a call to community, and wants us to walk out our faith in the same way.

## **Discussion Points**

1. Finish this sentence – ‘Family is....’  
(encourage the group to be open about the positives and also challenges of this)
2. It takes a village...
  - Why do we need a village to thrive – especially within a faith community?
  - What does regularly meeting with our church community do in/for us and others?
  - What could be the unique challenges for different personality types in committing to a community of faith?
3. We can only manage a certain number of people within our life at any given time. About 50 regular social contacts, about 15 good friends and about 5 close friends.
  - How does understanding the concept of ‘Dunbar’s number’ help us understand people, and give grace when needed, in terms of our expectations of them within our community of faith?
  - Why are good relational limits necessary for us as Christ followers?
  - What is the unique invitation for each of us in this? Is it to increase our circle of Christian friends that we allow to speak into our lives? Is it to give ourselves permission that we can’t be all things to all people, and that God may be asking us to invest in fewer people more intentionally?
4. The ‘opposite spirit’... Jo reminded us that Chris spoke about this last year.

- How do we approach community in the opposite spirit to the world? (perhaps to think what we can give instead of what we can get, or, resisting aspects of western individualism).
- How can we include others who may not be the 'same' as us, but require significant community nonetheless?

*We only learn to love people as we love people*

### **PRAY and Apply**

Jo asked us some questions towards the end of the message.

- Who could I be a good friend to?
- Who could I be part of a village for?
- Who am I Samwise to? (Lord of the rings reference, Sam supporting Frodo)
- Who do I go into battle for?

Pray about the above, asking God to show you how he wants you to be in community in this time and season of your life.