



# CELL GROUPS

**Strengthen your Faith. Grow in Love. Build the Church**

**Tabernacle Baptist Church, Penarth  
12 Bible Studies For Small Groups**



# Preface

Back in 2003, whilst I was still the associate pastor at Tabs, the senior pastor, John James, asked me to go to a conference about small groups. I describe the experience of attending that conference and what followed on the next two pages. After I reported back on the conference John carried on his own reading and exploration of small group principles and he became so convinced by the value of a cell church structure that he transitioned our church small groups to a cell model, and went on to write a book about ‘Healthy Churches’ based on his studies and thinking.

One of the leaders of the Cell Church Movement at the time was a man called Lawrence Singlehurst. Lawrence uses a phrase to describe the natural tendency of churches to revert back to older ways of doing things which are comfortable and safe. He says that “In church, everything swerves to rot”. What he means is that over time, any new thing we do in church can lose focus and direction, and become less than it was intended to be.

Over the 13 years since we first started talking about Cell Church at Tabernacle, we have seen our small groups slowly revert back to being just ‘Bible Study Groups’ or ‘Fellowship Groups’, so I thought it was a good time to remind ourselves of the Cell Church principles behind our small groups and look again at the studies we used 13 years ago to launch our new small groups.

The distinctive feature of a Fellowship group is that it meets primarily for fellowship. The distinctive feature of a Bible study group is that it meets primarily for Bible study. However, the distinctive feature of a cell group is that it functions as a cell: like a biological cell it is designed to grow, divide and multiply whilst at the same time carrying the DNA of the larger organism. A cell which doesn’t grow and replicate is unhealthy; we call a cell which doesn’t carry the DNA of the larger body cancerous. In a church, small groups or cell groups should have a mission focus aimed at growing the church whilst sharing the values and characteristics of the wider body.

With this in mind, we amend and republish those studies and commend them to you for your use as a small group.

The studies used in this series are adapted from [Moving to Cells](#) by Laurence Singlehurst (2002)

# Preface - A Personal Perspective

In September of 2003 I made a trip to Hoddesdon, Herts, for a training conference run by an organisation called Cell UK. I remember that as I drove around the M25 the first grey showers of autumn were starting to fall, I had the start of a cold and I was pretty miserable! To top it all the conference was lasting 4 days, and I had never spent that long away from Claire and the children before! The conference itself was only attended by 8 delegates, but none the less it was a phenomenally packed programme. Each day was scheduled to start with breakfast at 8.00 am with included a discussion of 'church principles' over toast and coffee. The day ended at 10.00 pm each night with what was called a 'practice cell session'. In between we studied theology, ecclesiology, church history, group dynamics and leadership skills.

I drove back to Penarth on the Friday afternoon exhausted and slightly puzzled. The trainers had said very little that was new to me, but in the way they put the information together they were making a rather grandiose claim. What they were claiming was that for a large part of its history, the Church in Europe and North America had gone astray from biblical principles. For hundreds of years, they said, we had been 'doing' church completely wrong!

I needed more convincing, so I went home to study and pray. I read a number of books on small group ministry, on group dynamics and on Church history. I bought some books on what have been called 'Cell Structures' (a list of some of these books is included in the Bibliography at the end of the studies for those who are interested). I talked with other ministers, read the Bible and prayed, often into the early hours of the morning. By November I felt confident enough to go to the leadership and share a little of what I had learnt.

Out of that presentation the leadership asked me to begin a prototype group to explore whether the principles of cell church might work in Penarth, and so straight after Easter of 2004 nine people gathered in my front room to begin the experiment. Over the next 6 months 36 different people came to the group, including a number of non churchgoers and non Christians. Some have continued to attend, some have fallen away, but the group has always grown numerically, in relationship one with another and in

spirituality. After six months the group moved venue, and continued to attract new people. In February of 2005 the leaders of the group met with John James and we agreed to divide into 3 new groups with a definite plan to start a fourth group very rapidly. New leaders were selected, venues chosen and following a social event the group was duly divided.

I recall one particular evening when the original group met together. I had had a difficult few days, and was feeling a little low. I had made a blunder in a pastoral situation that needed sorting out, a number of people had been unhappy with the previous week's Family Time, a loved older member of the Church was dying and the rest of the week looked very busy with no chance of a day off in prospect. Everyone may have smiled knowingly when I said I was thinking of going back to social work, but that was just how I felt at the time!

As the group gathered we welcomed one another and moved into a gentle time of worship. We then read from the scriptures, studied the word, prayed for one another and for our unsaved family and friends. We moved on to break bread together and shared in a time of fellowship over coffee and cake. When everyone had left I sat on my sofa and said to Claire, "That is what Church should be like. That is the kind of community I signed up to be part of." It had been a beautiful, loving, authentic expression of the Christian life. It truly reminded me of the description of the Church in Acts. Over a year after returning puzzled from the conference in Hoddeson I was finally convinced that there was something to this small group theory!

Roger Grafton

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer... Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47)

# Introduction

“He's gone”. The paramedic speaks slowly and softly as if to ease the truth into Karen's mind. But the truth strikes like a missile and explodes in shock and loneliness. She feels jerked from reality, thrust into a twilight zone of pain. Then the gentle touch of Ann's hand draws her back. Jeff's firm embrace surrounds her with strength. Jenny's whispered word reminds her she is not alone. The tears that fall from David's eyes help her find her own. For over two years Tim and Karen had poured time, energy, and love into each member of the small group they led. Now the love circles back and soothes the raw edges of grief.

This is church.

Twenty-nine years old, worth a million and headed straight toward the top. Then this young man meets Jesus. “Lay it on the line”, the Saviour says, “Put your money where your mouth is”. A few months later and it's December. Building-fund time. The rich young man stares at the stage in the overcrowded, rundown cinema that the young congregation calls home. He shifts in the dirty seat and smashes another kernel of popcorn under his heel. “Lay it on the line”, the Saviour says. The rich young ruler tucks his hand into the pocket of his corduroy coat and gently fingers the tiny paper that defines his success. When the offering bag is passed, he carefully slides a cheque that shatters his net worth beneath the mound of crumpled bills.

This is church.

Angie pulls into the car park as she does every Monday night, but on this night she drives past her usual parking area and parks her car by the maintenance building at the rear of the church property. Walking back toward the church building, she silently thanks God for the Christian mechanics who volunteer their time on Monday nights. While Angie attends the ministry for single mothers and her daughter attends a class for children of divorced parents, a grease-smeared hero with his back on a concrete floor replaces the brake pads on her car. Without this help, she couldn't keep her vehicle.

This is church.

The people of God gather in the sanctuary of their church building. Throughout the week they have met in each other's homes and in the

church centre to work out their Christian life together. They have eaten together, prayed together, studied the word and loved one another in practical ways and now they are coming together as the body of Christ to give him thanks and praise, to receive teaching and to share in bread and wine. This is not a one day a week expression of faith, but the bringing together of a lifestyle devoted to God and to the fellowship.

This is Church!

However, for many Christians their experience of Church is very different. For some people Church is a one morning a week activity, whilst for others what they hear and sing on a Sunday has little or no effect on the way they live for the rest of the week. For some Church is a place to go and express their 'private faith' in a way that doesn't interact with other believers. For yet others Church is a place where they feel excluded, isolated or lonely. None of these experiences of Church come close to the Biblical expression of Church outlined in the book of Acts. In fact, it is impossible to live a New Testament, Biblical Christian life if the only expression of your faith is to come to Church on a Sunday morning. "Cell Church" is an attempt to overcome unhealthy Church life and build a vibrant, living and healthy expression of Church.

**A Cell Church is a church made up OF small groups, not a church WITH small groups.** The word Cell in this context comes from Biology not from Prison! Small Groups are about life, growth, multiplication and diversity just like the cells in your body. The biological cell is a basic building block of life. Healthy cells multiply themselves millions of times in the course of a lifetime. Each new cell looks identical to the original cell because the DNA branded nucleus multiplies itself before the cell reproduces. In this way, the new cell is as healthy and productive as the original cell in its given role. The cells work together as organs, muscles, bone and skin to make the body function as a true miracle from God.

A spiritual cell group, or small group as we call them at Tabernacle, is very similar to a biological cell. Followers of Jesus Christ edify one another and increase the kingdom by sharing their lives with unbelievers. New leaders are raised up from within the group to grow and expand the ministry to a hurting world. When the group multiplies, the process repeats itself.

Cell groups aren't simply another name for a Bible study, fellowship group or Home groups. They are a group of believers who have banded together for a season to make their Christian walk more effective for the Kingdom, to reach the lost, minister to the hurting and each other, and discover their leadership potential. Cell groups study the Word, but they do so in order to live out what they read and use it effectively to penetrate a dark world with the light of Jesus Christ . . . which is quite different from studying a passage each week

for general knowledge. Cell groups also have lots of fun together, but this fellowship is specialized in that its purpose is to invite unbelievers to social events where they will meet Christians. In other words, cell groups even use fellowship as an evangelistic tool! Finally, a cell group/small group should meet in a place and time that is comfortable for both the believers and unbelievers visiting, and provide enough time to share deep concerns and pray for one another. Rarely can either of these things be done within one hour and a half at a church building on a Sunday morning.

Some people worry that small groups will march to the beat of their own drum, operating independently and dividing the church. Not so! Cell groups help to live out what the pastor preaches on Sunday. Cell leaders are faithful *under-shepherds* for the senior pastor and the Lord, serving in a unique capacity to serve and love. Cells are not house churches or autonomous. Small groups extend ministry and evangelism to every person in a local church body. Both the small group meeting AND the main Sunday meetings work together to equip, enable and enthuse every member to be active ministers in the body of Christ.

Small group members meet weekly in homes, schools, offices or anywhere else that they can find! The meeting place is not as important as convenience, time and space issues. Group members find the best place to minister to one another and make evangelistic plans to touch the lost. This is where cell members and unbelievers experience “the Christ within and in the midst” with other believers, or an *immanent* expression of Christ.

Small Groups also come together with other groups as a local church body at celebration services, usually held on a Sunday. There is corporate worship, solid teaching from God's Word, and a time for pastoral ministry. This is where cell members and unbelievers experience the *transcendent* expression of Christ.

Both gatherings are vital for success. The small group meets to experience Christ's love through others in a warm setting. The celebration service (the gathering of small groups) is to experience God in high worship and to receive teaching from His Word. One without the other would not fulfil all God has for His people.

While believers meet together each week to share their lives and pray as a cell group, the productive work of the group members is done in the days and hours *between* meetings. The meeting itself is seen as a discovery time for a week of ministry to each other and the lost. God desires for us to live in community and commanded us to work out our salvation *together* (Phil. 2:12). We were never instructed to live the Christian life outside of a caring community. Iron sharpens iron, which means a cell group is an ideal place to



grow. A believer might be challenged from a message heard on Sunday, but he will certainly need other believers with whom he can interact and build trust to live it out fully and then give it away to others.

The power to reach this lost world is ours. As believers in Jesus Christ, we have been commanded to fulfil the Great Commission found in Matt. 28:18-20. Small groups employ “net fishing” to successfully reach friends, family, co-workers and neighbours in “relational evangelism”. When they are reached, fewer converts fall away with this approach, because new believers are adopted into a spiritual family and a new church home. It's also easier to reach people for Jesus as a team... and it's so much fun!

The 5 key values of small groups are:

**A**ll involved  
**B**ecoming Disciples  
**C**reating Community  
**D**oing Evangelism  
**E**ncountering God

To meet these purposes each small group meeting has four elements known as the 4 W's;

**Welcome** where the group gels together and everyone is made to feel involved.

**Worship** where the group seeks to encounter God through prayer and praise.

**Word** where the group seeks to apply God's word in their everyday lives.

**Witness** where the whole group looks outwards in practical ways.

From time to time we need to be reminded of this philosophy and practice, and after 13 years the time has come. This series of studies is intended as a reminder of what small groups are all about. The studies themselves are short and to the point, but this is to allow more time for fellowship and prayer, and a deeper discussion of one text. We hope you enjoy exploring the cell model of small groups afresh!

# Week 1

**Value:** Jesus at the centre

**Welcome** Tell the group three things about yourself which they do not already know — one of which is untrue. Ask the group to guess which one you have made up.

**Worship** Ask each person to say something about the character of God which they appreciate, and why it is particularly relevant at this time. Lead a time of thanking God for these aspects of his character.

**Word** Goal: to highlight our motivation for the choices we make.

If Jesus comes first in our lives our motivation to be obedient will show in the choices we make. Ask the group to think of some significant choices they have made recently. Share some of these with the group, describing briefly the process of their decision-making. Ask whom they were motivated to please in the decisions they made.

**Read John 14:12-26.** Jesus wants us to be motivated out of love for him and the Father. What commandments specifically do you think Jesus was referring to? Which commandments are the most important? (see Matthew 22:36-40)

Looking at verse 21, what is it that gains us the love of the Father? What do we have to do to be loved by God?

Why do we keep Jesus' commandments? What motivates us?

Whether we read the commandments in the first five books of the Old Testament, or what Jesus said about the Law in Matthew 5:17-22, we find that it sets a standard that is almost impossible for us to keep. Is it reasonable to expect us to keep all the commandments? How on earth can we do it? (see John 14:15-16 and 14:26)

Ask the group to list some reasons why we should be obedient to Jesus. (For example; Romans 5:6-8. God's love for us demonstrated in Jesus' death. And Deuteronomy 5:33; obedience results in blessing.) In pairs or triplets, share one area where you are struggling to be obedient to God and then pray for each other.

**Witness** In the same way that we want Jesus at the centre of our own lives, we also want him to be Lord over the area where we live. As a group, identify the strongholds that are standing against Jesus' rule in our area, eg: materialism, 'religion', pride, educational achievement. Pray together for these to be broken.

# Week 2

**Value:** **Small groups are communities where there is sacrificial love within open and honest relationships**

**Welcome** Name something that makes you feel loved and unloved.

**Worship** Remember the things God has done which show that he loves you — share these with the group. Either thank him for these things, or worship him by singing or playing a chorus with the theme of thanking God for his love for us.

**Word** **Read 1 John 3:13-24.** Make a list of the things these verses tell us to do. When can you remember these things being done in the church?

How does verse 15 relate to Matthew 5:22? How does verse 16 relate to John 3:16. Reading these verses together, what is the relationship between ‘believing’ and ‘doing’?

Throughout history some people have struggled with these verses because they seem to link our salvation with how we act as much as what we believe (see also James 2:14-17) How are we saved?

According to verse 14, how do we know we are saved and passed from ‘death into life’?

What does it mean to “lay down our lives for our brothers”? Practically, what should we be doing? Do these verses apply to us in the Western church, or were they written only for those facing persecution in the early church?

According to verse 24, how do we have the power to live in God in the way he calls us to?

Spend some quiet time seeing if “our hearts condemn us” (verse 20).

As a group, or in pairs, confess aloud the things that come to your mind, ask God for forgiveness if necessary and be accountable to each other in trying to change. Pray for each other, asking God to help you to do these things.

**Witness** **Read John 13:35.** Jesus says that our especially loving community will have an impact on unbelievers. If God is asking us to be marked by our love for one another, how can we achieve this in the small group?

# Week 3

**Value:** Every member in ministry

**Welcome** Say which colour describes the kind of day you have had, and why.

**Worship** Choose a recorded worship song. Ask God to speak to you through the music. Listen to the track and then ask the group to write down what it makes them think about. Share these things in the group.

**Word** **Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 and 27-31.** Which gifts are listed in verses 7-10? Make a list on a large sheet of paper. Ask different people to describe each gift, giving an example of when they have seen the gift in action. Add a definition of each gift to your list. Discuss together what happens to the whole church if each gift is missing.

Verse 7 says that ‘to each one’ a manifestation of the Spirit is given. What are your spiritual gifts? What would you like your gifts to be? Are the two things different?

Having listed the gifts and ministries of the Holy Spirit, Paul finishes chapter 12 by saying he will show the church ‘a more excellent way’ (verse 31). What is that more excellent way? How does this ‘more excellent way’ tie in with the studies in week 1 and 2?

**Read Romans 12:4-10.** Add these gifts to your list. In both Corinthians and Romans Paul completes his list of spiritual gifts with an exhortation to love. Why do you think this is? Has the church always been loving in the way spiritual gifts are introduced or used?

We are told to “eagerly desire the greater gifts”. To your list of the gifts add the name of each group member who would like to have that gift or to grow in using it. Ask God to help you by praying for each other to receive this gift and to have the boldness to use it.

Work out specific ways that you can hold each other accountable to use these gifts in the context of the small group. Keep your piece of paper and over the coming weeks return to it often as a group to make sure everyone is growing in using the spiritual gifts.

**Witness** The small group has looked at ways of developing a loving community. How can you expose non-believers to this special community? (John 13:35.) Plan a specific event where you can do this. Pray for God to bless your plans.

# Week 4

**Value:** Every member maturing

**Welcome** Ask each member “What is your greatest challenge in terms of spiritual growth?”

**Worship** If you have a musician in the group, ask them to prepare and lead about ten minutes of worship. If no musician is available, ask a group member to bring some recorded music and lead the group in a time of worship either by singing with the track or by meditating on the words as they are sung. It may help to write out a copy of the words for each person.

**Word** **Read Philippians 3:12-14 and 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.** Paul was an incredible Apostle and follower of Christ. He wrote much of the New Testament! What on earth would Paul have to learn or grow in?

The Christian life is likened to a journey or a race. What are the goals of this journey?

**Read Hebrews 12:1-13.** What holds us up on the journey? What kind of things does Paul mean when he says “everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles”?

One of Paul’s key themes in all his letters is the idea of maturing, or ‘growing up’. Why does Paul emphasise maturity so much?

In biology, what are the key features of a mature organism compared to an immature one? How does this relate to maturity in the church? What should a mature church look like?

What is the relationship between maturity, love and holiness?

In pairs or triplets, ask each other for honest answers to the question: “What things are stopping me from becoming more like Jesus?” There are many answers, but it could be a specific recurring sin or hurt from the past, unbelief or lack of faith. Pray for each other, asking God for a breakthrough in these areas. You could use Romans 8:1-3 as encouragement. Ask group members to be accountable to each other about the things they have shared, and to encourage one another to change.

**Witness** Spend some time praying again for God to establish his Kingdom in your neighbourhood.

# Week 5

**Value:** Everyone making God known

**Welcome** When and how did you become a Christian?

**Worship** **Read Psalm 121** together. Divide the Psalm into four sections of two verses each. Give these sections to group members and ask them to write a short thanksgiving prayer about their section. Read the Psalm again, stopping after each section so that the prayers can be read out after the relevant verses.

**Word** What does Jesus think and feel about the lost?

**Read Luke 15:1-32** What example does Jesus set us?

Do you feel the same as Jesus does about your friends or family who don't know him?

In the parable of the lost sheep, the sheep was once part of the flock but wandered off. **Read John 10:11-16.** How are we to understand these verses? How should we imitate Jesus in these verses?

In our modern setting, who are the 'tax collectors and sinners' and who are the Scribes and Pharisees? What is the danger for the church when we start thinking about mission?

In the parable of the lost son, the son realizes that he has made a mess and needs help and forgiveness. What was the role of the Father (representing God) or the older brother (representing the religious people) in this 'conversion'?

What should our role be in mission and reaching the lost?

**Witness** The group needs to build a "hit list" of non-Christian friends to pray for to become Christians. Ask each member to name three people who live locally and who are not Christians. This needs to be done prayerfully in order to choose those whom they believe God is asking them to build a relationship with. For some group members this might mean beginning new relationships with neighbours or taking up a new interest or hobby in order to make contacts. It is important to be real about where group members are on this — for some it means a lifestyle change to make time for these friendships.

# Week 6

**Value:** Everyone making God known II

**Welcome** Who influenced you most when you were 12 years old? Who influences you most now?

**Worship** In a time of silence, ask the group to come before God in repentance, confessing wrong attitudes and evidence of selfishness in their lives. You could choose to focus on repentance around attitudes to the lost.

Worship God together by thanking him for his accepting love and forgiveness.

**Word** **Read Luke 10:1-20.** Ask the group to work out Jesus' strategy for evangelism from his instructions to the seventy-two.

Where does preaching play a role in this strategy? Where does fellowship play a role? What about eating?

How could we apply these principles to our modern church?

Ask the group to work out a strategy which applies to our situation. What is the next step for them individually, and as a group, to see friends come to know Jesus?

How are we to deal with those who reject the message of Jesus? What should our next step be?

What was the role of healing in Jesus' mission plan? How do we apply that to our fellowship?

Jesus was an effective preacher and healer, and could attract large crowds. Why did he send out the seventy-two? What can we learn from this?

What should be the roles of the pastors, elders, leaders and congregation in our modern mission setting?

**Witness** Work out the next step for those in your network of friends on the 'hit list' you drew up last week. Is it to deepen those friendships or have the courage to pray with your friends, to believe God will answer prayers, or to know how to 'tell them'?

Pray for opportunities and God's blessing as you reach out to these friends. Remember to ask about answers to these prayers next week.

# Week 7

**Value:** **Biblical communities are marked by honesty**

**Welcome** Ask each group member “What would stop you from being honest?”

**Worship** Encourage the group to be a thankful people by sharing things which have made them grateful to God. Ask everyone to thank God for these specific things which he has done for them

**Word** What can we learn about how we should relate to one another? Read the following verses to find some of the answers:

**1 Thessalonians 3:12**

**Ephesians 4:15-16**

**Hebrews 10:24-25**

**James 5:16**

Discuss what helps the development of trust and honesty. Which things stand against us being open?

From the Ephesians reading, describe the relationship between honesty, love and maturity. What is the purpose of ‘speaking the truth in love’?

Why do we sometimes feel the need to tell people ‘the truth’ even if we know it is hurtful? Is it for the same reasons Paul describes?

From the Hebrews reading, what is the relationship between fellowship and being accountable to one another?

From the end of verse 25, what is the context in which we do it? Why is this context important?

Looking at the James reading, how easy do you find it to honestly confess your sins to one another?

James seems to link sickness and sin together in this verse. This is quite a controversial idea for some people! What do you think about that?

Name specific ways in which we need to work harder at being open with one another? Be accountable to each other in this as a group.

Pray for members whose past experiences have made them wary of trusting others.

**Witness** Ask the group members how they are progressing with their friendships. Pray again for those on the cell list, that they will become open to the gospel.



# Week 8

**Value:** Jesus at the centre - hearing God's voice

**Welcome** How does God communicate with you? Give an example from your own life.

**Worship** **Read Psalm 23.** Think of times when the truth in this Psalm has been evident in your life. Give God the glory for the great things he has done! Find your own way to do this, or write a poem or psalm together, or sing praises to him.

**Word** **Read John 10:1-16.** What conditions have to be in place for us to hear God's voice?

What comes first? Do we choose to follow God, or does he choose to call us?

How do you hear from God? Encourage people to share their experiences of hearing from God.

Who is the thief in the parable Jesus tells? How can we avoid being 'stolen'? What is the importance of fellowship with one another and our relationship with Jesus in this?,

**Read Acts 16:6-11.** How do you think the Spirit 'kept' or 'forbade' Paul and his companions from going to Asia? How did the Spirit 'not allow' them to go to Bythinia? How did the Spirit tell them to go to Macedonia? Do you think the Spirit used the same means to communicate in all 3 examples?

What other ways does God speak to people in the Bible? Look at some of the examples you suggest.

If we are going to effectively use our gifts to minister within the small group, and to those outside the church, we need to grow in confidence about hearing from God. Ask each group member what they think is the next step for them, then pray for each other to move forward in this.

Ask someone to share a current situation where they need to hear from God. Lead the group in a time of listening to God about this situation. Believe that he is going to speak and go around the group afterwards to hear what they believe he said.

**Witness** In pairs, ask God what is stopping each one's three friends on the "hit list" from becoming Christians. Expect God to reveal an area of wrong thinking, sin or something in their circumstances. When you have heard for each person pray into their situation.

# Week 9

**Value** Jesus at the centre - our worship life

**Welcome** What helps you in your walk with God?

**Word** The purpose of this week is to encourage everyone to be worshippers.

Read the story of the woman at the well from **John 4**. What can we learn about worship from this passage?

How does Jesus initially engage the Samaritan woman? How does he begin their encounter? What can we learn from this?

Jesus wants to talk to the woman about her relationships with men (verse 18, but the woman ducks the issue and starts talking about the theology of worship! (verse 20). What is Jesus' response? What can we learn from this?

We read that 'many Samaritans' believed in Jesus and his word because of a conversation about what true worship is and where it should take place. What is the importance of worship in mission? What can we learn from this?

The woman and the other villagers got to know Jesus, and so believed in him. Knowing whom we worship is vital. In what areas do we need to grow and expand our understanding of who God is?

Jesus says that who and how we worship are more important than where. **Read Psalm 24:3-4**. What do we need in order to worship? Are there any aspects of my life which are a barrier to me coming close to God? **Read Romans 8:15-16**.

Real worship is in spirit and in truth. What does this mean? How do we apply this in our worship?

Does the style or quality of our worship together in Tabs matter to God? Does it matter to our mission when we bring 'outsiders' in?

**Worship** Have a time of worship either by singing or with a CD or tape of worship songs. You could begin this with a time of confession and lead into intimate expression of gratitude to God for who he is and what he has done.

**Witness** Do you know how to tell people the truth about Jesus?

What equipping do you think you need to be able to explain the gospel to one of your friends? Pray, and plan to address the issues that come up.

# Week 10

**Value:** Community — what is love?

**Welcome** If you could change one thing about yourself what would it be?

**Worship** Open with a time of confession — asking the Holy Spirit to bring to mind anything we need to confess, thinking especially of anything we have done that has been unloving, e.g. gossip, using people, lusting, not doing something for someone, and so on. Thank God that he forgives us.

**Word** What do you tend to do when you've been hurt? Broken relationships need attention. **Read Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 6:14-15 and Colossians 3:12-14.** From these verses what is the key to mending broken relationships?

Matthew 5 talks about if someone has something against you, whilst Matthew 6 talks about if you have something against someone else. Which is the easiest to deal with? Why?

In the Colossians reading we are told to 'bear with one another.' Practically, what does this mean?

In Matthew 6 it says that if you don't forgive someone, God won't forgive you. Colossians 3 says that because we are forgiven, we ought to forgive others. Compare these two verses and discuss how they fit together.

In a missional setting, why is forgiveness and unity so important?

Who can give an account of when they forgave someone, and what happened as a result?

Is there anyone in the group who needs to ask for forgiveness from another group member or who needs to forgive someone? Is anyone struggling to forgive someone right now? Pray for each other now.

**Witness** Do you have any difficulties in your relationships with any of your unbelieving friends or family? Is there anyone you need to forgive? Is there anyone you need to ask forgiveness from? How can you put this relationship right? What's the next step?

Pray for one another and next week remember to ask how it went.

# Week 11

**Value:** Every member in ministry - serving others

**Welcome** What was the best present you ever received? What made it especially important?

**Worship** Build a pile of 'Ebenezer stones'. Bring several stones to group, enough for each person to have three or four. **Read 1 Samuel 7:12** and together make a list of the times God has given generously to you as a group or as individuals. Each time you remember an occasion when the Lord has helped you, place a stone on the pile in the centre of the room.

**Word** **Read Romans 12:1-8.** List the motivational gifts; a 'motivational gift' is something that affects our behaviour.

According to verse 1, what is the basis for our worship? Why is it important to start there?

Verse 1 begins with the word 'therefore.' What is the 'therefore' there for? Look at the verses before in the last chapter to find out what Paul is referring to.

**Everyone will tend towards one or maybe two main motivational gifts. The goal of the remainder of this session is for each person to begin to recognize their gift.**

Work as a group, or in pairs, to create a definition of each gift. Share these definitions. Then ask the pairs to help each other remember times when they have felt pleased or found satisfaction with what they have done, or when they have been complimented by others.

From these memories ask them to work towards knowing their gift. Suggest they continue to think and pray about this during the week and leave a time to share their conclusions at the next group meeting.

**Witness** Use this time to plan another social event when you can meet with each others' friends from the "hit list". Ask God to show you what to do and for him to bless your plans.

# Week 12

**Value:** Every member in ministry - our motivation

**Welcome** What do you think is your motivational gift from last week's list in Romans 12? Give reasons why you have chosen this gift.

**Worship** As a more active time of worship, ask the group to think of attributes of God's character and write each of them on a sheet of A4 paper. You will need to name more attributes than there are people in the group. Place the paper randomly on the floor. Group members then move around the room standing on a piece of paper and praise God aloud for the character attribute they are standing on. They move on to the next piece of paper when they are ready and again praise God aloud. If your group has less mobile members, get someone to place a marker on a piece of paper for them... or allow them to point with their walking stick!

**Word** **Read John 7:37-39 and Luke 11:11-13.** What did Jesus teach about the Holy Spirit from these two passages?

What did Jesus mean when he said we should come to him and drink? How do we do that?

From John 7:37, who is included in this promise, and who is excluded? What is the basis for receiving the Spirit?

From Romans 8:5-11, why do we need the Holy Spirit for us to be effective in ministry?

Motivational gifts are very different from Ministry gifts. The church often glamorizes the ministry gifts (healing, prophesy, tongues, preaching/teaching, casting our spirits) more than the motivational gifts. Why do you think this is? Why do we need both sorts of gifts? What is the relationship between them?

Check our motives for wanting to be filled with the Holy Spirit, by challenging the group to confess unbelief or disobedience and then pray for one another to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Witness** Now that you know more about the gifts God has given you, how can you use these gifts to bless your non-Christian friends and family? Work in pairs, preferably with those who have the same gift, to answer this question. Pray for each other to have opportunity, creativity, and courage to use your gifts in evangelism. Ask the group to continue to pray and think through this question and to bring their conclusions to the next meeting.

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Beckham, Bill	Second reformation	1995, Touch Publications
Potter, Phil	The Challenge of Cell Church	2001, BRF
Singlehurst, L.	Sowing, Reaping, Keeping	1995, Crossway Books

# Useful Websites

[www.celluk.org.uk](http://www.celluk.org.uk)

<http://www.cell-ideas.co.uk>

[www.emerging-church.org](http://www.emerging-church.org)

<http://www.cell-ideas.co.uk>



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[www.tabspenarth.org.uk](http://www.tabspenarth.org.uk)