



METRO

EquipMETRO Trainee & Trainer Resource Manual

The purpose of EquipMETRO is to glorify the one true God who has revealed Himself in His Son Jesus Christ by training others to make Him known, who then train others to do the same.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents2

The Metro Vision.....3

Introducing EquipMETRO4

 Preparing for EquipMETRO.....4

 Trainee AND Trainer4

 The Three Strands4

The Program5

Suggested Timeline:.....6

Appendix A. 5x5x5 Devotion model

Appendix B. The Ministry Training Church

Appendix C. Daily Time with God

Appendix D. Joining a Ministry Team

Appendix E. Joining a Growth Group

Appendix F. Leading a Growth Group

Appendix G. Giving a Testimony

Appendix H. Personal Evangelism

Appendix I. Walk-up Evangelism

Appendix J. Meeting One to One

Appendix K. Giving a Short Talk

Appendix L. Christian Households.

THE METRO VISION

The purpose of METRO is to glorify the one true God who has revealed himself in his Son Jesus Christ by training others to make him known, who then train others to do the same.

Ministry

- METRO is about ministry training, specifically geared for the local church context.
- METRO promotes an evangelistic ministry model as standard for local church ministry.
- METRO recognises that developing evangelistic ministries is not the primary task of theological colleges, and so needs to be developed prior to college.
- METRO therefore, is training that aims to engender a philosophy of evangelistic ministry within a potential ministry candidate.

Equipping

- METRO is geared not simply towards developing evangelistic ministers but developing evangelistic ministries and evangelistic churches.
- METRO focuses therefore, on the key role of ministers as equippers (see Eph 4:11-12), preparing the whole church for works of ministry.
- METRO recognises that, fundamentally, healthy churches are evangelising churches: the bigger picture of evangelistic training is training across the entire life and ministries of the church.

Training

- METRO recognises that this evangelistic, equipping model of ministry is best learnt through the apprenticeship of one-to-one training (see 2 Timothy 2:2) in the context of one-to-one training, the whole person is trained — this can be thought of as three strands:
 - Being like Jesus: Personal Godliness
 - Thinking like Jesus: Theological Reflection
 - Serving like Jesus: Ministry Skills
- METRO benefits not only the trainee, but strengthens the training culture for:
 - The trainer, through an intensive training experience
 - The local church, as the trainee becomes a focal point for developing a training culture
 - The Presbytery, as neighbouring churches are spurred on to be involved in METRO and its benefits
 - The denomination, through the calibre and experience of ministry candidates.

Recruiting

- METRO provides a pathway for people considering theological training to take steps in that direction by profiling and building such training into the local church context, METRO trainees, in turn, become examples for (and trainers of) others heading down such a training pathway.

Organisation

- METRO recognises the need for one-to-one training to be facilitated through resources such as funding and a training curriculum.
- METRO recognises the need for one-to-one training to be networked with other trainers and trainees, and supported through coaching provided by experienced trainers.

INTRODUCING EQUIPMETRO

EquipMETRO is a one-year part-time traineeship aiming to give an adult of any age experience and training in ministry.

Trainees will be encouraged to be, think and serve like Jesus in their context as well as to explore new areas of service.

It is a requirement of EquipMETRO that the trainee and trainer catch up at least fortnightly.

Preparing for EquipMETRO

The EquipMETRO traineeship begins at the METRO graduation/orientation day in November. Training with the trainer then begins in December and concludes the same time the following year.

Bearing in mind that the EquipMETRO program is part time, and it is likely that trainees will simultaneously be fulfilling other family and/or work commitments, the recommended reading has been greatly pared back. This has two benefits-

- Maximising the trainees time to spent practicing ministry activities.
- Providing only the most pertinent of resources. It is therefore recommended that trainees make every effort to complete the recommended reading as listed.

There are of course, far more resources at your disposal! To access further ministry papers to those found in this document, visit:

<http://metro.pcv.org.au/resources/>

By far the most useful resource for the trainee is the trainer. For this reason, it is recommended that intentional energy be spent investing in this relationship and your time together.

Trainee AND Trainer

In keeping with the 2 Timothy 2:2 model, the program is designed such that the trainee is always simultaneously a trainee and a trainer.

This 'trainee and trainer' shape is reflected through the trainee meeting not only one-to-one with their trainer, but also with key others they are training—passing on their training.

An ideal one-to-one meeting will spend time on each of the three strands below (e.g. a 90 minute meeting will spend 30 minutes on each of the strands).

The Three Strands

Being like Jesus: (growing in godliness) EquipMETRO emphasises daily bible reading and prayer as the key to godliness, and discussion/accountability in the training relationship in relation to this. There is also specific attention given to personal evangelism and family life.

Thinking like Jesus: (Theological reflection) EquipMETRO sets essential reading that both prepares the trainee for future training and stimulates the trainer/trainee's thinking in relation to life and ministry.

Serving like Jesus: (ministry skills) EquipMETRO is designed to develop thinking and skills in certain core areas of ministry. The main training resources used are the Ministry Papers, alongside other key reading.

THE PROGRAM

EquipMETRO is designed to be tailored to the Trainee's areas of interest. However, it is commendable to try to extend yourself beyond your usual areas of service; especially while you have the wisdom, support and guidance of a trainer.

With this in mind, the following program (see over page) has been drawn up, remembering that the aim is for trainees to grow in being, thinking and serving like Jesus.

EquipMETRO trainees and trainers are also required to attend the following events in the course of the traineeship:

- METRO Orientation Afternoon - Late November/Early December
- Engage Leaders' Conference - Late January (Trainees only)
- MTS Challenge - Late July/Early August
- METRO Graduation Dinner - Late November

Suggested Timeline

NB: See appendices for all "Ministry Papers".

Books to buy include:

- Christian Beliefs by Wayne Grudem
- Side by Side by Ed Welch
- Together Through the Storm by Sally Sims

November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Orientation at the METRO graduation/orientation
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start meeting with trainer • Start devotions using the <i>5x5x5 method</i> (see Appendix 1) • Start reading Wayne Grudem's book- <i>Christian Beliefs</i>. • Go through the ministry paper- <i>The Ministry Training Church</i>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Engage conference (Belgrave Heights)
Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the following ministry papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Daily time with God</i> • <i>Joining a ministry team</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Then the trainee is to join a ministry if not already serving in one. • <i>Joining a small group</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Then trainee is to join a small group if not already in one. • <i>Leading a small group</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Then the trainee is to plan and lead a small group.
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete reading book- <i>Christian Beliefs</i>, if not already done • Read the following Ministry Papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Giving Your Testimony</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Then make an opportunity for the trainee to give their testimony • <i>Personal Evangelism and Walk-up Evangelism</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage in walk-up evangelism or door-knocking, over Easter • <i>Meeting 1 to 1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Start meeting with someone one to one • Start Reading the book <i>Side By Side</i> by Ed Welch
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the following Ministry Papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Giving a Short Talk</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Then give a short talk • <i>Christian households</i> • Attend MTS Challenge Conference (August)
Term 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Together Through the Storm</i> by Sally Sims • Do some more door-knocking for Christmas • Read a ministry paper from http://metro.pcv.org.au/resources/ on to extend the trainee in an area of actual, or potential, service.

APPENDIX A. 5x5x5 DEVOTION MODEL

October

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		1 John 3
2		4
3		5
4		2 John 1
5		3 John 1
6		Reflection
7		Reflection
8		1 Peter 1
9		2
10		3
11		4
12		5
13		Reflection
14		Reflection
15		John 1
16		2
17		3
18		4
19		5
20		Reflection
21		Reflection
22		6
23		7
24		8
25		9
26		10
27		Reflection
28		Reflection
29		11
30		12
31		13

November

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		John 14
2		15
3		Reflection
4		Reflection
5		16
6		17
7		18
8		19
9		20
10		Reflection
11		Reflection
12		21
13		1 Thessalonians 1
14		2
15		3
16		4
17		Reflection
18		Reflection
19		5
20		2 Thessalonians 1
21		2
22		3
23		2 Peter 1
24		Reflection
25		Reflection
26		2
27		3
28		Jude 1
29		Revelation 1
30		2

December

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		Revelation
2		Reflection
3		Reflection
4		3
5		4
6		5
7		6
8		7
9		Reflection
10		Reflection
11		8
12		9
13		10
14		11
15		12
16		Reflection
17		Reflection
18		13
19		14
20		15
21		16
22		17
23		Reflection
24		Reflection
25		18
26		19
27		20
28		21
29		22
30		Reflection
31		Reflection

© 2005 by Discipleship Journal. All Rights Reserved. The 5x5x5 Bible Reading Plan materials crafted by Bill Mowry. The New Testament Bible Reading Plan developed by Mark Bogart and Peter Mayberry.

READY FOR MORE? We have additional reading plans and much more at www.discipleshipjournal.com.

Try Discipleship Journal for yourself!

Online: www.discipleshipjournal.com

Phone: 1-800-877-1811

Mail: P.O. Box 5548, Harlan, IA 51593-3048

Discipleship Journal's mission is to help believers develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and to provide practical help in understanding the Scriptures and applying them to daily life and ministry.

5x5

(DJ) Discipleship Journal®

Bible Reading Plan

Through the New Testament in 5 days a week, 5 minutes a day

5 minutes a day If you're not currently reading the Bible, start with 5 minutes a day. This reading plan will take you through all 260 chapters of the New Testament, one chapter per day. The gospels are read throughout the year to keep the story of Jesus fresh.

5 days a week Determine a time and location to spend 5 minutes a day for 5 days a week. It is best to have a consistent time and a quiet place where you can regularly meet with the Lord.

5 ways to dig deeper We must pause in our reading to dig into the Bible. Below are 5 different ways to dig deeper each day. We recommend trying a single idea for a week to find what works best for you. Remember to keep a pen and paper ready to capture God's insights.

- 1. Underline or highlight** key words or phrases in the Bible passage. Use a pen or highlighter to mark new discoveries from the text. Periodically review your markings to see what God is teaching you.
- 2. Put it into your own words.** Read the passage or verse slowly, then rewrite each phrase or sentence using your own words.
- 3. Ask and answer some questions.** Questions unlock new discoveries and meanings. Ask questions about the passage using these words: who, what, why, when, where, or how. Jot down some thoughts on how you would answer these questions.
- 4. Capture the big idea.** God's Word communicates big ideas. Periodically ask, *What's the big idea in this sentence, paragraph, or chapter?*
- 5. Personalize the meaning.** When God speaks to us through the Scriptures, we must respond. A helpful habit is personalizing the Bible through application. Ask: *How can my life be different today as I respond to what I'm reading?*

January

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
		Mark
1		1
2		2
3		3
4		4
5		5
6		Reflection
7		Reflection
8		6
9		7
10		8
11		9
12		10
13		Reflection
14		Reflection
15		11
16		12
17		13
18		14
19		15
20		Reflection
21		Reflection
22		16
		Acts
23		1
24		2
25		3
26		4
27		Reflection
28		Reflection
29		5
30		6
31		7

February

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		8
2		9
3		Reflection
4		Reflection
5		10
6		11
7		12
8		13
9		14
10		Reflection
11		Reflection
12		15
13		16
14		17
15		18
16		19
17		Reflection
18		Reflection

(February, continued)

	Acts	
19		20
20		21
21		22
22		23
23		24
24		Reflection
25		Reflection
26		25
27		26
28		27

March

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		28
		Hebrews
2		1
3		Reflection
4		Reflection
5		2
6		3
7		4
8		5
9		6
10		Reflection
11		Reflection
12		7
13		8
14		9
15		10
16		11
17		Reflection
18		Reflection
19		12
20		13
		Galatians
21		1
22		2
23		3
24		Reflection
25		Reflection
26		4
27		5
28		6
		James
29		1
30		2
31		Reflection

April

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
		James
1		Reflection
2		3
3		4
4		5
		Matthew
5		1
6		2
7		Reflection
8		Reflection
9		3
10		4
11		5
12		6
13		7
14		Reflection
15		Reflection
16		8
17		9
18		10
19		11
20		12
21		Reflection
22		Reflection
23		13
24		14
25		15
26		16
27		17
28		Reflection
29		Reflection
30		18

May

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		19
2		20
3		21
4		22
5		Reflection
6		Reflection
7		23
8		24
9		25
10		26
11		27
12		Reflection
13		Reflection
14		28
		Romans
15		1
16		2
17		3
18		4
19		Reflection

(May, continued)

	Romans	
20		Reflection
21		5
22		6
23		7
24		8
25		9
26		Reflection
27		Reflection
28		10
29		11
30		12
31		13

June

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		14
2		Reflection
3		Reflection
4		15
5		16
		Ephesians
6		1
7		2
8		3
9		Reflection
10		Reflection
11		4
12		5
13		6
		Philippians
14		1
15		2
16		Reflection
17		Reflection
18		3
19		4
		Colossians
20		1
21		2
22		3
23		Reflection
24		Reflection
25		4
		Philemon
26		1
		Luke
27		1
28		2
29		3
30		Reflection

July

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
		Luke
1		Reflection
2		4
3		5
4		6
5		7
6		8
7		Reflection
8		Reflection
9		9
10		10
11		11
12		12
13		13
14		Reflection
15		Reflection
16		14
17		15
18		16
19		17
20		18
21		Reflection
22		Reflection
23		19
24		20
25		21
26		22
27		23
28		Reflection
29		Reflection
30		24
31		1 Corinthians 1

August

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		2
2		3
3		4
4		Reflection
5		Reflection
6		5
7		6
8		7
9		8
10		9
11		Reflection
12		Reflection
13		10
14		11
15		12
16		13
17		14
18		Reflection
19		Reflection

(August, continued)

	1 Corinthians	
20		15
21		16
	2 Corinthians	
22		1
23		2
24		3
25		Reflection
26		Reflection
27		4
28		5
29		6
30		7
31		8

September

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		Reflection
2		Reflection
3		9
4		10
5		11
6		12
7		13
8		Reflection
9		Reflection
		1 Timothy
10		1
11		2
12		3
13		4
14		5
15		Reflection
16		Reflection
17		6
		2 Timothy
18		1
19		2
20		3
21		4
22		Reflection
23		Reflection
		Titus
24		1
25		2
26		3
		1 John
27		1
28		2
29		Reflection
30		Reflection

APPENDIX B. THE MINISTRY TRAINING CHURCH



*the ministry training church

the MINISTRY PAPERS

negative models

for many of us, the real problem when it comes to being a trainer is that **we were never a trainee!** We are trying hard to do unto others what wasn't done to us!

The ministry training culture that is increasingly part of the landscape in evangelical churches today has really only become so in recent years. It is not yet a second generation movement. This means many of those being asked to cut it as trainers never quite had the trainee stage. That makes it hard.

At this point, however, there are a number of things that can help. Peer relationships with others in the same ministry context are critical (a bit more on this later). Hopefully papers like this can prompt ideas. There are a variety of training networks around that are worth plugging into. And in any case, there's something to be said for the power of **negative modeling**.

It is possible to work backwards from negative models and learn so much from them!

Imagine the opposite of a good training model. Words like *unintentional* come to mind. And *maintenance*. And *non-reflective*. *Isolated*, *detached* and *remote* could be thrown into the mix as well. How about *piecemeal*, *haphazard*, *random*, *disorganised* ... and *passive*, *inert*, *reactionary*...

All of a sudden you've got so much material to work with! Fuelled with a strong sense of the direction you *don't* want to be going, you can now take up the Bible and listen with intent to what it's got to say about ministry! ... and to start picking new models that are headed in the right direction...intentional ministry, equipping ministry, training ministry...

This ministry paper '**the ministry training church**' introduces the big picture of the training model adopted in these MINISTRY PAPERS. It focuses especially on the role of pastor-teachers. It is essential to work through this introductory paper before using any others. The other introductory paper, '**meeting one to one**', fills out the relational aspects of the model, and broadens the focus to the role of other key leaders. It is also vital background.



investigate

read Ephesians 4:11-12

1. What are *pastor/teachers* meant to be doing?

2. As a result, what are *God's people* meant to be doing?

3. As a result, what should be happening in a church?



think & apply

4. What are the implications for you and your ministry?



ideas for discussion

In your church context, what will "maturity" typically **look like**? What will be some **concrete expressions** of the abstract idea? If your role is to equip/train people to be mature, what *is* this 'maturity'? Think hard about this before moving on. The overall goal might be 'Christ-likeness'. But try to break that down to a few more tangible points. This maturity will be evident through...

- ★
- ★
- ★
- ★

intentional ministry

Maturity in Christ isn't easily measured. It's about character not just activities. That said, it's helpful to identify a shape of what maturity will actually look like in your context. Maturity shows itself in certain key ways. And there are also some key ways people grow to further maturity. So it's good to have a plan. It's good to have a sense of where you're taking people...



two key goals

These MINISTRY PAPERS have been developed with a certain 'shape' of Christian maturity in mind. The mature Christian in our church will live out and grow in their Christlikeness through...

1. being actively involved in a **small group**
2. being actively involved in a **ministry team**

The aim is simple: just two major goals! And yet, the table below shows how many objectives are addressed through this simple approach. It also shows how crucial the first major goal is: involvement in a small group. An intentional small group ministry addresses a number of objectives. A healthy small group provides accountability for all relationships in the believer's life. Indeed, it is even through small groups that the other major goal—involvement in a ministry team—is addressed.

small group goal	ministry team goal
<p>✦ a growing relationship with God, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> personal bible reading and prayer</p>	<p>✦ according to the needs of the church according to the gifts of the individual believer</p> <p><i>MINISTRY TEAMS PAPERS (e.g.):</i> crèche ministry kids church ministry kids club ministry primary school scripture youth ministry high school lunchtime groups university ministry pre-school mums outreach child protection support ministries</p>
<p>✦ growing relationships with other believers, especially through the small group</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> leading a small group; joining a small group encouragement; hospitality</p>	<p><i>MAIN MEETING MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> welcoming ministry music ministry audio ministry preaching that connects leading church kids talks drama/set-up pieces bible readings & prayers</p>
<p>✦ growing relationships with those in their family/household, as servants</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> marriage preparation Christian households raising kids to follow Jesus</p>	
<p>✦ growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through personal evangelism</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> personal evangelism personal apologetics; cults</p>	
<p>✦ growing relationships with the whole church in mission, serving in a ministry team</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> joining a ministry team see next column...</p>	

pathways

The core business of pastors is this: equipping God's people for works of service. Not simply ministering *to* others. But enabling the ministry *of* others. Training, therefore, is not an optional extra for the pastor/teacher but *central* to our role. And training is not an optional extra for God's people, but must be provided for all of them.

Unless this training is *intentional*, however, it probably won't happen. That means identifying *goals*, as already discussed. It also means identifying the tangible steps needed for people to travel towards these goals.

Everyone's pathway to maturity will be different. But it's worth trying to identify what a standard pathway will look like. What steps are involved? What strategies might help people move from one stage to another?

Identifying a standard pathway enables you to identify roughly where someone is at. It also helps identify what their next step might need to be. It's not always neat, of course. But it's a starting point for intentional ministry.

Referring to the list of MINISTRY PAPERS on the left, hopefully it might be apparent how the various papers are designed to help facilitate the pathway below. The next page will expand on how this can work...

stage	strategy
Christian?	personal evangelism
initial church contact	welcoming team
maintaining contact	hospitality
getting acquainted	newcomers group
getting involved	joining/linked to a small group
getting equipped	active in small group
trained for ministry	taken through ministry paper
training others	take others through paper
leading small group	apprentice leader



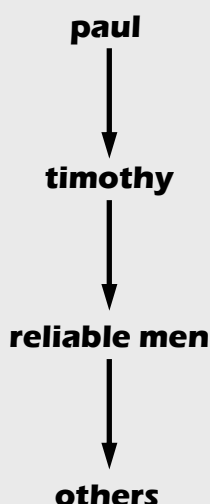
relational ministry

You have worked out some tangible goals of what Christian maturity might look like in your church context. You have worked out what some of the key steps look like on the pathway to these goals. Now it's time to train. So here's the key question: what will this training look like? When we think training, it's time to think BEYOND THE EVENT, to relationships!

teach a man to fish?

we have long ago taken hold of the idea that we need to do more than give a man a fish... we need to teach him to fish. But there's another step needed when it comes to ministry ... we need to teach others to teach others to fish. In 2 Timothy 2 we see Paul teaching Timothy to teach others to teach others...

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2).

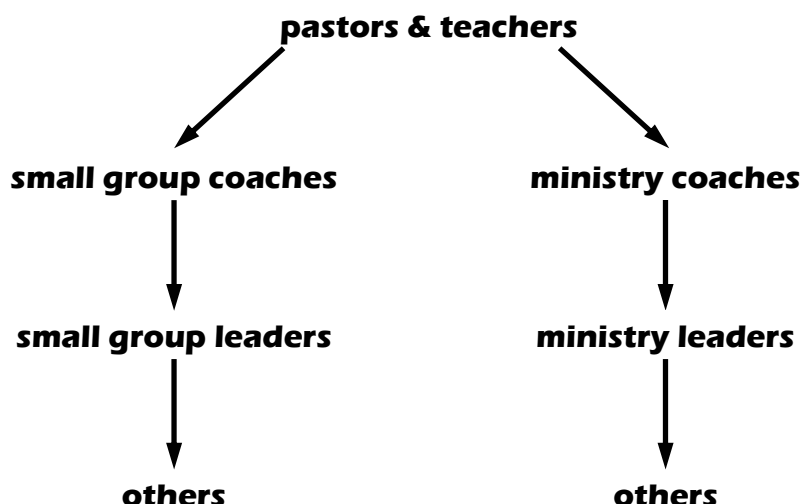


An important underlying principle of these papers is the notion of 'span of care'. This concerns how many people one person can care for. It's an especially important concept in the context of the 'small groups' ministry papers. It's also extremely relevant to becoming a ministry training church. We might call this 'span of training' - how many people can you train?

If Ephesians 4 challenges pastors to train everyone, 2 Timothy 2 reminds us that this will mean starting with a few key people, through whom everyone can be trained.

When we think about training we need to think **culture** not just events, **relationships**, not just activities.

Too much of our approach to training is **event**-focussed. We hope that if we can drag enough people along to the training event – it will be an instant fix all, with everyone who attends changed forever! The reality is, however, that while training events have their place, on their own they tend to produce very little lasting impact. The event can act as a useful catalyst. But unless there is an ongoing training relationship for feedback, discussion and prayer, not much will result. Unless there is a genuine sharing of struggles, training is **not training!** Worse, outside of a relational context, ministry skills are abstracted from personal godliness and theological development... so we're not training the person.



*all these coaches & leaders all must be trained in the two foundational ministry papers: * the ministry training church & * leading one-to-one... as well as the relevant leadership paper (e.g. * leading a small group or * youth ministry). They must be equipped by pastors (over time) to, in turn, take people they lead through relevant papers...*

Remember, the role of the MINISTRY PAPERS is not simply to transfer *content*, but to establish these trainer/trainee relationships. In this way, the *process* is as important as the content. The paper forms a 'contract' of agreed approach to the ministry, a basis for ongoing reflection, and a springboard to further reading and discussion. It's the starting point for an ongoing training relationship. This is why the 'meeting one-to-one' paper is also vital for all coaches & leaders.

notes:

- * training is geared through two main arms: the small groups arm and the ministries arm.
- * the intervening stage of 'coaches' is needed if the total number of small group leaders/ ministry leaders is, say, in double figures (span of training).
- * pastors train small group coaches (who then train small group leaders e.g. 'leading as small group') and ministry coaches (who then train ministry leaders e.g. 'youth ministry').
- * small group leaders not only orientate people to being part of a group ('joining a small group'), but have responsibility for training/equipping in the 3rd & 4th areas listed on page 2. They will, therefore, take their group members through the household/family papers & personal evangelism papers (assistant/apprentice leaders will also be needed!).



fellow workers

You need a plan. And to make it happen, you need a team! New Testament ministry was always a team thing. Our ministry should be no different. The kind of ministry shown on the previous page will not happen through someone working one-out. You're going to need to develop a team of key leaders who share your ministry...and life...

ministry papers & fellow workers...

Peter is a gifted musician. A great person to have involved in music ministry. But even better than his ability on the guitar, is Peter's ability to understand gospel ministry. Peter is a fellow worker.

After being involved in music ministry at church for a year or so, Peter was appointed leader of night church music. All the training he'd received through meeting one-to-one throughout that time, would now be passed on.

Whenever a new person is potentially joining the night music team, Peter makes a time to sit down and meet with them. Whether musician, singer or sound person, he meets with them to go through the music ministry paper.

This 'up-front' meeting is invaluable. Lots of questions are answered, and issues clarified. From theology through to pragmatics, a lot of ground is covered. For Peter, his leadership is seen to not be arbitrary, but based on a thought out gospel-centred approach to the ministry. And for the new team member, they understand what it is they are joining.

Of course, it's not that just this one meeting sorts out everything. But a key foundation for the relationship in team ministry together is put in place. Many later questions/issues can be clarified by reference back to key points covered in the paper.

It's great to have a fellow worker like Peter looking after music at night church. It's not just music, it's ministry.

read to the end...

Unfortunately, the end of Paul's letters are at best skated over or at worst ignored altogether. Preached on them lately? They are often dressed up with inspiring Bible sub-headings like "concluding remarks". Better would be "fellow workers", "passing the baton" or "thoughts on team ministry". Where ever Paul did ministry, there were always plenty of these fellow workers alongside him....

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my **fellow workers** in Christ Jesus (Romans 16:3)

Greet Urbanus, our **fellow worker** in Christ... (Romans 16:9)

Timothy, my **fellow worker**, sends his greetings to you... (Romans 16:21)

We are God's **fellow workers**; you are God's field, God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9)

As for Titus, he is my partner and **fellow worker** among you... (2 Corinthians 8:23)

But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, **fellow worker** and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger... (Philippians 2:25)

Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my **fellow workers** for the kingdom of God... (Colossians 4:11)

To Philemon our dear friend and **fellow worker** (Philemon 1)

it takes time...

Developing a training culture means investing time in a few people who share your vision for the church & who'll share it with others, who'll share it with others... it needs to be the next biggest slab of time in your week, after preparing the Bible Talk. In fact, on a regular basis, when you're not preaching, it's also a good idea to devote a whole week just to team development.

Being fellow workers means sharing life and ministry together. Weekly one-to-one meetings are crucial, as well as staff or team meetings. But these need to be merely the platform for team ministry not the sum total of your communication or interaction. As with all relationships quality time happens within quantity time. You can't always pick the minute in your team when a good idea will blossom, or a good conversation spark. So you need to really give yourself to the team. Out of the quality of these gospel partnerships grows the whole culture of the church. Feed it!

office of ministry...

Synergy. Communication. Accessibility. Teamwork. Ministry focus. Training culture. All sound worth having?

A church-based shared-office environment, where possible, can really help get it happening.

who are your fellow workers?

what are you doing to train them?

what are you doing to train them to train others?

how might a planned approach to training help?

APPENDIX C. DAILY TIME WITH GOD



★ daily time with God

the MINISTRY PAPERS

“bible facts...”

How are you on your Bible facts? You know, interesting facts about the Bible...

Did you know the Bible was the first book ever printed? In 1454 the first thing off Gutenberg's press was the Bible. Did you know the first ever voice radio broadcast on December 24, 1906 was a reading from the Bible. And Luke 2 on Christmas Eve was a nice choice.

You may know that the Bible's the best selling book of all time. But did you know that it's also the most stolen? You might know it's been translated into lots of languages but did you know the count's now over 1200? You might know that the Bible's divided into chapters but did you know that was only first done in 1228, and the verse divisions in 1551? Makes you wonder what the signs said at sporting events before you could just hold a sign saying “John 3:16”!

You might know it takes a while to read through the whole Bible, but did you know that about seventy hours does it? You might know that the Bible's got some long names in it, but did you know the longest is Maher-shalal-hashbaz?

There's all sorts of Bible facts you can reel off, and I reckon it's pretty interesting stuff. But the Bible fact I find most interesting of all, is this: lots of people believe the Bible is the Word of God, but don't actually read it all that much. You can throw alongside that a 'prayer' fact: lots of people believe prayer is powerful but rarely pray.

The reality is, lots of us struggle to spend a daily time with God in the Bible and prayer. The key thing isn't to wallow in guilt about it. This paper is about a fresh look at why a daily time with God is important. It also offers some practical ideas to get you started. Better still, it throws in some ideas about accountability to keep you going and keep you growing.

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

Our church has two main 'arms': small groups & ministry teams. This 'daily time with God' paper relates within the **small groups** arm. It's designed to help your small group leader encourage you to spend a daily time with God in Bible reading and prayer.



key **verse**

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” **Colossians 2:6-7**



investigate

stop and think

read the verses again. What do they mean?

read Colossians 1:28-2:15

look at the verses in their context...
and answer the questions below:

1. What is Paul's goal for every Christian? (1:28)

2. What is a real danger for every Christian? (2:4)?

3. What will be the key to facing this danger? (2:6-7)

4. Why is Christ the key to knowing God? (2:9)

5. How does the cross mock any other way of knowing God? (2:15)



think &
apply

6. Paul's main concern for us is that we continue as we started: with a simple, total focus on Christ. Why are we tempted to make it more complicated?

the bible: listening to God

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:15-17



investigate

1. What is able to make us wise for salvation?

2. Where does Scripture come from?

3. What is Scripture useful for?

4. Does the Bible only *partially* equip us to live out our salvation? Why/why not?

5. Does the Bible only equip us for *some* good works? Why/why not?



think & apply

6. What part, then, should the Bible play in our lives?

7. Given all that God promises here about his Word, the Bible, why do people go looking for other ways of listening to God?

8. What practical constraints are there to you reading the Bible each day? How can you overcome these?

communication is the key

Often when you hear people talking about a relationship problem, the heart of the matter is a communication problem. We know it well: a healthy relationship grows through healthy communication.

We probably don't think about this enough, but the same applies in our relationship with God. A healthy relationship with God means healthy communication. Growing in our relationship with him means growing in our communication with him.

Our relationship with God actually started with good communication. First, we heard the word of God, the gospel. God spoke to us: "I'm offering you forgiveness through my Son's death...". We listened to God speak in his Word (perhaps spoken through a friend or a preacher). Then we responded with our words, we prayed: "sorry, please forgive me, thank you, help me to now live with Jesus as Lord".

Problem is, if there hasn't been a lot of communication since then, there won't be much growing either. We were called in Colossians 2:6-7 to grow in Christ 'just as you received' him as Lord. That applies strongly to the idea of a daily time with God. It really calls for a regular pattern of reading the Bible and praying. It's not just some religious idea. It's a relationship. It's keeping the conversation going that we started when we first became a Christian.

But there's another important thing to remember. Since we received Christ Jesus 'as Lord', this is not just a chat. Nor is it a conversation between equals. He sets the agenda for our communication.

That's why reading the Bible comes first. Listen to him. Listen expecting to be challenged: Jesus is Lord! Listen, then pray in response. Pray knowing that you're talking about the things God says matter most, rather than us dominating the conversation. He will listen to us, but first we should listen to him.



ideas for discussion

family/household time with God...

Paul talks about Timothy's 'infancy' in the verses above. We gain insight into his infancy earlier in ch 1 vs5. What a great thing when children grow up with the Scriptures! While the main focus of this paper is our own personal daily time with God, we should remember also the importance also of reading the Bible together at home. In your family/household situation, consider how the Bible can play more of a part in your life together.



prayer: talking to God

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7

getting started

time and place

Morning might be best. It shows the priority of meeting with God, committing the day to him. Your mind is probably less cluttered. If morning is difficult (e.g. getting the kids off to school...), mid-morning might be better, or during your lunchbreak. You might have to experiment, but find the time that works best and stick to it.

how long?

Be realistic: start with 15 minutes and let it grow. *Be focused:* don't watch the clock! *Be expectant:* you're meeting with God! Aim for quality not just quantity.

the right resources

A Bible: with good size print, and in an easy translation (e.g. NIV).

A notebook: for insights and prayer points. *A Bible reading plan:* (see some suggestions over page).

a model to begin with:

Relax: slow down and focus on what you're doing & pray. Ask God to help you understand his Word and that his Spirit would help you respond in obedience and faith. Remember, this is unlike any other reading—you're listening to God!

Read: read the Bible passage. Often it helps to re-read it, maybe a couple of times. So don't aim to cover too much.

Reflect: think about what it means. Look for a key verse. What's the flow of thought? What's the main idea, encouragement, challenge? What does it tell you about Christ and living with him as Lord?

Record: write notes about what you've learnt & how it applies to you. Don't rush this part of it. The more you think here, the more meaningful your prayer will be...

Request (pray): praise, confess, thank. Bring your requests to God.

praying Scripture

We need to pray the Bible. Turn what you've read in the Bible today into a prayer. Look over the notes you made from the Bible and turn them into prayer. Now you're having a conversation with God! You can be confident you're praying about what matters.



investigate

1. What are we to be anxious about?

2. What are we to pray about?

3. As we pray about everything, what attitude should we have?

4. What is (and isn't) promised as the answer to our prayers?

5. Why are prayer and anxiety opposites?

6. How might this help us understand why we often don't turn to God in prayer?

7. We are told to pray with thanksgiving. Outside of the worries of the day, what timeless truths can keep us thankful?

8. How might this thankfulness for Christ (and an eternal perspective on life) be the key to the peace that is promised?



think & apply

pray for others, pray your day...

When we pray, it's easy to be dominated by our own concerns that flood our head. And Paul certainly encourages us to bring those things to God. However, what strikes you about Paul's own prayers in his letters is how he's always looking beyond himself, praying for others (e.g. Phil 1:9-11). That's a challenge for us. Try 'praying your day'. Think about the people you'll see today and watch for how you can be used by God in their lives through what you do and say.



ideas for discussion

useful resources

There are lots of useful resources around to help get you started and keep you going with your daily time with God. What's best for you can depend on your circumstances so it's worth trying some different approaches. Most importantly, as we'll see, one of the best resources God has given us is each other.



getting started

'Short steps for long gains' from Matthias Media is a great way to get started in a daily time with God. It consists of 26 short Bible studies (starting with A for Assurance and finishing with Z for zeal), each one based on a Bible verse, with half a dozen questions to stimulate encouraging conversation and prayer. It's designed to do with a friend but is excellent also for personal use. That said, if you're struggling to get going with a daily time with God, doing something simple like this with a friend (perhaps someone from your small group), might be just the thing to help you get started. There's a family edition too.



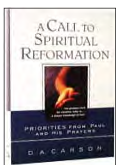
keeping going

The booklet mentioned above and other resources like it are great to get started. But there's a time to go a bit deeper. The problem with lots of daily bible notes commonly available is that they jump around the Bible a lot. They're helpful to a point, but to really get into the Bible it's best to work through whole books over time. Topical notes won't stretch you the way working through a book of the Bible does—both in knowing Christ better, and in the sustained personal challenge that also brings. The Briefing, also from Matthias Media, has a useful section called 'Bible Briefs' which gives you a few simple questions each day to help you work through a book of the Bible. The Briefing also has lots of useful articles to help you grow in thinking biblically about the issues going on in the world, our churches, and our lives.



digging deeper

When you're established in daily Bible reading patterns, it's worth taking on the challenge of reading through the whole Bible. Or if you've done that before, doing it again! In 'For the Love of God' Don Carson has reworked the classic Robert Murray McCheyne Bible reading system for easier use, guiding you through the New Testament and Psalms twice, and the Old Testament once in the course of 365 days. This excellent resource includes one-page expositions and devotional comments for each day.



praying the Bible

This paper has focused on the idea of 'praying the Bible' - striking up a conversation with God by listening to him in the Bible and praying in response to what you read. Taking this idea further, we can learn how to pray through studying the prayers we find in the Bible. That's what this book, also by Don Carson, 'A Call to Spiritual Reformation: priorities from Paul and his prayers' is all about. It's a call to a deeper prayer experience based on Scripture. From Paul's "school of prayer", he especially focuses on how Paul prays for others to know Christ better.

a prayer diary

for all the great resources out there... it's worth putting in some effort to bring together some resources of your own. Especially when it comes to prayer, and the people you want to pray for. Sometimes there are so many people to pray for we end up not praying regularly for any of them. A prayer diary can be a great help here:

1. make separate lists of prayer points under some major headings: Personal, Family, Church, Friends, Evangelistic Contacts, Missionary Work.
2. spread the points from each list across your prayer spots for the week. This will bring variety to each prayer time and consistency to your overall prayer life.
3. have a space on the page where you can add current points.
4. review the list every month.

small groups and accountability

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:24-25

The table below shows a number of key goals that our small groups are aiming for as we seek to encourage each other. It's all about relationships. The small group is a context in which we can be accountable for all the important relationships in our lives.

Of course, the one relationship that's key to all other relationships is our relationship with God. Yet in turn, it's our relationships in our small group that encourage us in our relationship with God. Specifically, it's where we can keep each other accountable about growing a daily time with God. It should be an essential part of what we pray for and encourage each other in. This accountability might just make the difference to keep us going...



a growing relationship with **God**, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer

growing relationships with **other believers**, especially through the small group

growing relationships with those in their **family/household**, as servants

growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through **personal evangelism**

growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team

my
prayer
diary

APPENDIX D. JOINING A MINISTRY TEAM



*joining a ministry team

the MINISTRY PAPERS

getting it wrong...

John arrived at church a couple of months ago. He made it clear when he first arrived that he has a real gift in the area of kids talks. He's been frustrated in previous churches that haven't allowed him to properly use his gift. He loves doing kids talks and suggests he should be involved in the kids talks program as soon as possible. In fact, John isn't really open to other forms of serving in the church. Stacking chairs was definitely not his gift. Or cleaning toilets. Kids talks is his particular gift. And if it's his gift, he should use it, right? John was especially reluctant about the need to go along to the newcomers group that was starting at church. He was beginning to think maybe there's another church that will better appreciate his gift. He was very frustrated with the leadership of the church in not recognizing what he had to offer.

What's the problem here? How could leadership have worked with John to help him take a better approach to serving in the church?

Melinda has been around at church for over two years now. She's a very quiet kind of person. She's happy enough at church and has got to know a few people. She's been involved in a small group for most of the two years, but somehow she doesn't feel as involved in the church as she would like. But she hasn't wanted to look pushy and isn't really sure how she could serve more anyway. Ask the leadership of the church how long Melinda has been around, even her own small group leader and they'd be surprised to learn it's been two years already.

What's the problem here? How could leadership have worked with Melinda to help her get more involved serving in the church?

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

Our church has two main 'arms': small groups & ministry teams. This 'joining a ministry team' paper relates to the **ministry teams** arm. It's designed to help your small group leader introduce you to our ministry teams. It also offers a process for thinking through which ministry team you might join.



investigate

read 1 Timothy 4:12-16

1. What is Timothy to do for other believers (verse 12)?

2. What is Timothy's particular gift (verse 13)?

3. Who identified this gift? Was it Timothy himself (verse 14)?

4. Does giftedness mean no work or training is needed on our part? Why/why not (verse 15)

5. What two things must Timothy watch closely? Why are each of these so important?



think &
apply

6. What does this passage tell us about the role of church leadership in promoting/commissioning the gifts of believers?

7. What encouragements and challenges does the passage present to you as you think about serving in a ministry team?

8. What issues other than 'giftedness' does the passage raise in relation to serving others in ministry?

start with **Christ...**

When we come to think about ministry and particular ways we might serve our church family, where do we start? It's a common mistake to start with the issue of gifts. It's easy to start with looking *inwards*: "what's my gift?". Far better, however is to start by looking *outwards*. And as we look outwards, the first place we should look is to Christ. We should start with Jesus, our Saviour and Lord. The issue of giftedness was certainly raised in our opening passage from 1 Timothy. It is important and we will come back to it. But the best place to start is with learning the attitude of Jesus...



investigate

read **Philippians 2:1-11**

1. What attitudes are we called to avoid (verse 3)?

2. What attitudes are we to adopt instead (verses 1-2, 4)?

3. How can we best learn this attitude (verses 5-11)?



think &
apply

4. What do we learn here about Christian ministry?

5. What personally challenges you?

small groups & ministry teams

The table below shows a number of key goals that our small groups are aiming for as we seek to encourage each other. It's all about relationships. The small group is a context in which we can be accountable for all the important relationships in our lives.

The last goal in the table relates to growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team. That's what this paper is all about: helping your small group leader encourage you to step forward in our mission together. We saw in the 1 Timothy passage that it's the role of leaders to help you, under God, to identify your gifts. It's the role of leaders to encourage you to use your gifts. But before we even talk about gifts, it's the role of leaders to help you think about your life and doctrine—your whole life in service to Christ.

...then **needs**

OK, so we need to look first to Christ. We need to look outwards to his example. But now we can work out my gift, right? Not yet! We've got some more outwards looking to do. When it comes to ministry we need to first look to Christ, then to the needs around us. In fact, when we do that, and start throwing ourselves into meeting needs we can see all around us, we might start using gifts we never knew we had.



ideas for
discussion

Philippians 2 talked about "looking to the interests of others".

✦ What 'interests' (needs) around you are you aware of:

- in your small group?
- in the wider church family?
- in the wider community?

✦ What are you presently doing to play a part in meeting those needs? How can you grow in this?



a growing relationship with **God**, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer

growing relationships with **other believers**, especially through the small group

growing relationships with those in their **family/household**, as servants

growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through **personal evangelism**

growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team



...then **character**

OK, so we need to look first to Christ. Then we need to look to the needs of others around us. But now it's time to work out my gift, right? Still not yet! When it comes to serving others, there's something the Bible talks much more about than gifts. It's our character. It's what Galatians 5 calls the fruit of the spirit. There's only a handful of passages about gifts in the New Testament. But every page challenges our character, in growing more like Jesus. We will get to the issue of gifts shortly, but more important is our character whatever gift we have, whatever ministry team we join...

the three strands...

The 'meeting one-to-one' ministry paper introduced the idea of three strands. There are three interwoven strands that must be developed in every believer. The three strands are:

- ✦ theological development
- ✦ personal godliness
- ✦ ministry skills

It's about head, heart and hands. It's about the whole person.

Once you've completed this paper it might be worth, if you haven't recently done so, looking again at the 'one-to-one planner' on page 3 of the meeting one-to-one paper. The step to join a ministry team needs to be taken within that broader context of growth. Talk, plan and pray about how to keep growing in each of the strands.

That's very much the theme continued in this 'joining a ministry team' paper. To serve in ministry means growing as a whole person in Christ. There's much more to consider than the issue of gifts alone. It's about theological development: growing in our knowledge of Christ and the truth about him. It's about growing in our personal godliness: having the attitude and character of Christ. Only in this context should we then also talk about growing ministry skills or giftedness.

Have a look at our starting passage again—1 Timothy 4. You'll notice how all three strands are present. Timothy is to *know* and proclaim the truth in the face of lies. He is not just to watch his doctrine closely, however, but his *life* as well. And it's in that rich context he is to exercise his ministry *gifts*.

You'll notice printed along the bottom of the one-to-one planner, verse 15 from our 1 Timothy 4 passage: *"be diligent in these matters; **give yourself wholly** to them, so that everyone may see your progress"*. The whole person!



investigate

read Galatians 5:16-26

1. What will it mean to live by the Spirit (verse 16)?

2. What is inconsistent with living by the Spirit (verses 19-21, 26)?

3. What is consistent with living by the Spirit (verses 22-25)?



think & apply

4. Paul talks about crucifying the sinful nature (see also 2:20-21). What needs to be 'killed-off' to grow Christ's character in you?

5. What aspects of the fruit of the Spirit need to grow more in your character?

6. Why will this sort of growth be essential to serving effectively in a ministry team?



ideas for discussion

Paul calls the Corinthians to "follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). We need to choose role models for ministry. But we need to choose them well.

Who has played a part in showing Christ to you by their example in ministry? What can you learn from their example?

now about **gifts...**

We've finally got there. The question of your gifts. But there's one more thing to sort out first. John, in our introduction, was convinced he had gifts for kids' talks. But was anyone else? In the biblical pattern, as in 1 Tim 4, it's better for leaders to 'commission' people than for them to put themselves forward. Leaders need to recognise gifts in people and encourage them to use them, as Paul and the elders did with Timothy. So it's time for you and your small group leader to talk about the possibilities. That way we won't repeat the other mistake made—with Melinda—of doing nothing.



investigate

read 1 Peter 4:7-11

1. Why does Peter say prayer is essential (verse 7)?

2. What does he reinforce for us about character (verse 8)?

3. What 'gifts' does he urge us all to pursue (verses 9-10)? Why?

4. What attitude should we have, whatever our gift (verse 10)?

5. What two categories does Peter place all gifts into (verse 11)?

6. What is the focus he calls everyone to have (verse 11)?

7. What do you think is the difference between 'speaking' and 'serving' gifts? Isn't 'speaking' also a way of serving?

8. Why might all ministry teams need both people with 'speaking' gifts and people with 'serving' gifts (see also Acts 6:1-7)?



think & apply



ideas for discussion

After our long-promised search for your gift, the result is surprising. On the one hand, the picture is so much simpler. There are only two basic gifts: speaking & serving. Even the more detailed lists in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 can be summarized into these two categories.

★ *discuss with your leader: are your gifts more in speaking or serving?*

On the other hand, the picture is more challenging. The biggest questions for us in joining a ministry team aren't about *gifts* but about *attitude, character* and growth as a *whole person* in the three strands of theological development, personal godliness and ministry skills.

★ *discuss with your leader: how can you "make progress" in your overall growth and training as a Christian?*

joining a ministry team...

We've covered a lot of ground:

- ★ focus on Christ
- ★ look to the needs all around you
- ★ grow in Christian character
- ★ & you'll start using 'gifts' you never knew you had
- ★ with your leader, discuss where your gifts more lie: speaking or serving (in other ways)
- ★ look at the ministries below—where could these gifts be used? where are the needs?
- ★ don't make John's mistake by thinking too narrowly—there's most likely a number of different ministry teams you could serve in and ways of serving in them.
- ★ don't make Melinda's mistake by doing nothing—work out a plan to see what's involved in a particular ministry team by meeting with its leader.

★ MINISTRY TEAMS

creche ministry
kids church ministry
kids club ministry
primary school scripture
youth ministry
high school lunchtime groups
university ministry
pre-school mums ministry
support ministries

★ MAIN MEETING MINISTRY

welcoming ministry
music ministry
audio ministry
preaching that connects
kids talks
leading church
setup-pieces/drama
bible readings & prayers
child protection

There are ministry papers available for these ministries, to work through with the relevant leader. You will then also need to work through a 'child protection' ministry paper.

APPENDIX E. JOINING A GROWTH GROUP



★ joining a small group

the MINISTRY PAPERS

on a mission...

Jesus commanded his disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" [Matthew 28:19-20].

This 'Great Commission' sets out two goals for a church:

- ✦ to REACH people for Christ; and
- ✦ to TEACH them to follow him.

The same ideas are found in what Apostle Paul says in Colossians:

"We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ". [Colossians 1:28].

A good mission statement will clearly express these two main aims for a church family, e.g.:

- ✦ present Christ to everyone
- ✦ present everyone mature in Christ

Of course, these two aims are always related. It's the same gospel that underpins both aims. The gospel of forgiveness and eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the basis of both our evangelism (reaching unbelievers) and our edification (teaching believers).

✦ evangelism

proclaiming the gospel to unbelievers
[present Christ to everyone]

✦ edification

teaching believers to live the gospel
[present everyone mature in Christ]

As we seek to live out this two-fold mission together as a church, our bible study small groups are a vital part of making it happen. This paper seeks to explain how and why! In fact, it shows why small groups are intrinsic to living out our mission together. It explains why we are not simply just a church that *has* small groups, but are rather, a church *OF* small groups...

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

Our church has two main 'arms': small groups & ministry teams. This 'joining a small group' paper relates to the **small groups** arm. It's designed to help your small group leader introduce you to what it means to be part of one of our small groups.



investigate

read Acts 2:42-47

1. What did the early church do when they met together?

2. How often did they meet?

3. Why do you think meeting with other Christians was such a priority for the early church?

4. Was it just a priority for them, or should it be for us as well? Why/why not?



think & apply

read Hebrews 10:24-25

1. What are we to consider?

2. What should we not give up doing? why?

3. Why do you think we are told to encourage each other?

4. In what ways might this encouragement be limited if we only see each other in larger once-a-week Sunday meetings?



investigate



think & apply

sunday church

Clearly, whatever we do in our large weekly meeting on Sunday, it is not the all-in-all of church life. It's important, but doesn't stand alone. Indeed, the idea of a church meeting just once a week isn't a biblical one. We don't stop being a church family when Monday comes! Rather, what we do in our large weekly meeting should help us live out our identity as a church on Monday, Tuesday ... right through the week. We need to see our sunday meeting not as the sum total of church life, but as a kind of 'platform' for our ongoing life together as a church family.



read Ephesians 4:1-16

1. What picture is given here of life as a church family?

investigate

2. What is the *reason* we are to be like this (verse 1)?

3. What is our *goal* as a church family (verse 13)?

4. What is the role of *pastors/teachers* (verse 11-12)?

5. What is the role of *everyone* (verse 12-16)?



think & apply

6. In what way does this passage help us to see the importance of Bible teaching in our church life?

7. This Bible teaching is to equip all God's people for 'works of service'. What does this mean for church life?

who ministers?

There is an important lesson from Ephesians 4 for us to learn...

we are ALL ministers!

So, we need to be clear about the role of pastors/teachers in our church family. Their role is not to *replace* the ministry of the people of God, but to *enable* it. The role of full-time ministers is to bring out the ministry of everyone else. Through bible teaching, training and modeling, all God's people must be equipped to serve.

So, we also need to be clear about the role of all God's people in our church family. We all have 'works of service' to do. We all have 'truth in love' to speak. We all have a part to play. We all have a ministry. The Bible teaching we receive is not an end in itself, but is to equip us for service of others.

Unfortunately, an unbiblical idea emerged in the history of the church. It is the idea of 'clergy' and 'laity'. In this model of church there are clergy (who *do* ministry) and laity (who *receive* ministry). But it's not the model we see in Ephesians 4 is it?



ideas for discussion

which model of church?

which of the following models of church is most biblical? which should we follow?

model	mindset	role of minister(s)	role of congregation	impact
MAINTENANCE	'keep things going'	change nothing	receive ministry	things do change! (they decline)
MINISTRY	'we need to grow'	ministers to everyone they can	passive – watching ministry	sometimes some growth
MULTIPLICATION	'we have a mission together'	teaching, training, equipping, modelling	all involved in ministry	true growth (Eph 4:16)



a church *of* small groups

If the Sunday meeting is the foundation of our life as a church family, our small groups are the building blocks. The Sunday meeting plays an essential foundational role as we learn together from God's Word. But it provides limited opportunity for the kind of prayer, fellowship and sharing of meals together pictured in Acts 2. And in terms of what we've seen in Ephesians 4, something more is needed for us to all carry out our ministry of 'speaking the truth in love' together (verse 15). Let's look at Ephesians 4 again and think about how being a church of small groups might answer its call...

how many people can you care for?...

Two people? Three? As many as five? Definitely not more than six!...

This Ephesians 4 picture of a church body is clear: everyone is to be supported. However, something else is also clear: while every part is to be supported, no single part can do this alone. There is a limit to how many people one person can truly care for.

What we are learning here are the principles of 'SPAN OF CARE' It's the idea that:

- everyone is cared for
- no-one cares for too many people

Of course, lots of care happens through relationships in our church family outside of small groups. Indeed, as we learn to speak the truth in love in our groups, this kind of godly relating should 'spill over' into all sorts of relationships in the church.

A structure of small groups, gives us great opportunities to develop these attitudes and skills. Not only that, without this structure, some people are inevitably 'lost' in the big group. This is especially true of newcomers and those who don't form relationships easily. Being a church of small groups helps ensure meeting the 1st principle: everyone is cared for.

Being a church of small groups also acknowledges the 2nd principle: that no one person can care for too many people. This means that groups must not grow too large (but seed new groups as they grow). It also means that group leaders must be supported/assisted in their role.

The back page discusses what it will mean to be a church of small groups, a church where no-one stands alone.



investigate

look again at Ephesians 4:11-16

1. What danger is always around us (verse 14)?

2. How can we avoid this danger (verse 15)?

3. What positive things will then result instead (verses 15-16)?



think & apply

4. Doing bible studies together is only the beginning of group life. How can we build on this?

5. What will it mean for us to 'speak the truth in love' to each other in our group?

6. The whole body is built up in love 'as each part does its work'. What part do you (will you) play in your group?



ideas for discussion

which model of small group?

which is the biblical model for a small group? why?

truth without love	Know the answers to the questions Be right Focus on information alone
love without truth	Know the answers to personal problems Be real Focus on feelings alone
truth in love	Know the truth about God and me Be honest with God and each other Focus on transformation – becoming like Christ

being a church of small groups...



ideas for discussion

a church where no-one stands alone

There's a big difference between just being a church *with* small groups and a church *of* small groups. Being just a church *with* small groups is an approach that says: 'small groups are there if you want it – just for the keen ones'. Being a church *of* small groups is an approach that says: 'everyone needs to be cared for, and everyone has a role to play in caring for others'. Being a church of small groups is not always the easy way. Relationships are hard work. We are called to love each other, not because of how lovable we all are, but because of Christ's love shown to us in his death on the cross. But it's worth it! Being a church of small groups benefits everyone. It's a great way to fulfil the biblical picture of a connected church family, speaking the truth in love, with every part supported.

newcomers...will be asked to a newcomers group but are also linked to a small group after their first couple of visits. While we'll all want to welcome every newcomer, it's best if we each know who we're especially responsible for. And it means, hopefully, no-one is overlooked. Your small group leader might encourage you to ask a newcomer over for a meal, etc. They may not actually attend your group for some time, or may end up in a different group, but the process helps ensure they're welcomed.

links...while attendance at Bible Study may not be possible for some, they're still 'linked' to a group so that they can be part of the care of the group. Without such linking, people who don't attend groups will be overlooked in the care of the church. The group prays for such 'links', seeks to encourage them, offers practical help such as meals, invites them to social activities... generally looks out for them.

small group members...commit themselves to their group in a number of ways: being there each week; coming with the study prepared; being ready to share honestly; focusing on other's needs, not just our own; extending ministry to others in the group through the week in terms of prayer, hospitality & encouragement; supporting the leader in caring for the group, including 'links'.

group leaders...have overall responsibility for seeing that each member (including links) is being cared for. This does not mean *doing* all the care (which the whole group shares in) but *overseeing* that it happens. They should lead by example. They should also identify and train apprentice leaders. Leaders do much more than simply 'read out the questions'. They will always have in mind all the relationships in the table (below right). They will ensure the group has time not just to 'do the study' but share genuinely and pray about all these relationships. This ministry to the members of their group will obviously also extend beyond the meeting. There are a range of ministry papers (like this one) that they can draw on to equip group members for growing in all these relationships.

apprentice leaders...offer special assistance to the small group leader in carrying out their role, and so also are at the same time being trained for leading a new group when needed. As groups multiply, there is always the need for more leaders.

coaches...support small group leaders in their role (talking and praying about how the group is going; sharing how to develop as a leader; offering useful resources for the group, etc). It is vital that leaders are supported well in their important role – so each coach should support only 3 or 4 leaders.

ministers (the Pastor/Teacher kind!)...support small group leaders through a special focus on coaches. e.g. rather than doing a poor job of trying to support 10 or 20 leaders, they aim to do a great job of supporting a few coaches who each support a few leaders. It all comes back to *span of care*: everyone is cared for; no-one tries to care for too many!

advantages of small groups

thinking about the picture of church life from Acts 2 we started with, as well as what we've learnt from Ephesians 4, consider some of the important ways that small groups can build on our weekly Sunday meeting...

bible study

more opportunity for asking questions, clarifying meaning, and sharing insights

prayer

more opportunity for sharing personal prayer points and praying meaningfully for others. Also provides opportunities for praying for ministries in our church, world mission, etc

accountability

greatly increased as you share struggles with each other and follow-up on these in an ongoing way

support

small groups act as great support networks - helping each other through difficult times, and sharing each others joys

ministry

great opportunities to serve others - through prayer, encouragement, leadership, etc

training

developing patterns of godly relating. Apprentice leaders trained up.

evangelism

great opportunities for introducing non-Christian friends to a smaller group of people from church (not so much through the Bible study itself, but other activities)

social activities

groups can organise social activities together, providing opportunities for fellowship, relationship-building and evangelism.

through the ministry of our small groups, all our relationships can grow...

a growing relationship with God , especially through personal Bible reading and prayer
growing relationships with other believers , especially in the small group
growing relationships with those in their family/household , as servants
growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through personal evangelism
growing relationships with the whole church in mission, serving in a ministry team

APPENDIX F. LEADING A GROWTH GROUP



leading a growth

on a mission...

Jesus commanded his disciples to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” [Matthew 28:19-20]. This ‘Great Commission’ sets out two goals for a church: to REACH people for Christ; and to TEACH them to follow him. These are the two key important goals of ‘evangelism’ (proclaiming the gospel to unbelievers) and ‘edification’ (teaching believers to live the gospel). Many church mission statements capture these two key goals, for example, “know Christ and make him known” or “present Christ to everyone, present everyone mature in Christ”.

on a pathway...

Mission statements can be very useful in stating goals but on their own can be a bit *static*. The notion of a pathway that people step along can be a more *dynamic* way of thinking to fill out the picture. It’s worth considering the pathway that people generally take as they move from not knowing Christ to being a mature follower of Christ.

The three simple words ‘connect’, ‘grow’, ‘serve’ can be very helpful for this pathway way of thinking. People need to **connect** to God through trusting in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to connect to a Christ-focussed church family. A key way to **grow** is through a bible study growth group. A key way to **serve** is through a ministry team. There’s a lot more that can be said than that, of course, but it’s a useful summary of the pathway to maturity in Christ.

This ministry paper seeks to explain why these groups are so vital to growing as a Christian and why we are not simply just a church that has growth groups, but are rather, a church OF growth groups...

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: ‘the ministry training church’ and ‘meeting one to one’.

Connect. Grow. Serve. After **connecting** to God through trusting in Christ, a vital way we can **grow** is through a growth group and a vital way we can **serve** is through a ministry team.

This MINISTRY PAPER is designed to help your growth groups pastor/coach introduce you to what it means to lead one of our growth groups. As outlined in ‘the **ministry training church**’, growth group leaders play a crucial role in our church. This paper is longer than others and may need a couple of sessions. It starts with the material everyone looks at in ‘**joining a growth group**’, and then builds in extra material for leaders.



read **Acts 2:42-47**

1. What did the early church do when they met together?

2. How often did they meet?



3. Why do you think meeting with other Christians was such a priority for the early church?

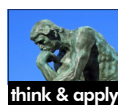
4. Was it just a priority for them, or should it be for us as well? Why/why not?



read **Hebrews 10:24-25**

1. What are we to consider?

2. What should we not give up doing? why?



3. Why do you think we are told to encourage each other?

4. In what ways might this encouragement be limited if we only see each other in larger once-a-week Sunday meetings?

sunday church

Clearly, whatever we do in our large weekly meeting on Sunday, it is not the all-in-all of church life. It's important, but doesn't stand alone. Indeed, the idea of a church meeting just once a week isn't a biblical one. We don't stop being a church family when Monday comes! Rather, what we do in our large weekly meeting should help us live out our identity as a church on Monday, Tuesday ... right through the week. We need to see our sunday meeting not as the sum total of church life, but as a kind of 'platform' for our ongoing life together as a church family.



read **Ephesians 4:1-16**

1. What picture is given here of life as a church family?

2. What is the *reason* we are to be like this (verse 1)?

3. What is our *goal* as a church family (verse 13)?

4. What is the role of *pastors/teachers* (verse 11-12)?

5. What is the role of *everyone* (verse 12-16)?



6. *In what way does this passage help us to see the importance of Bible teaching in our church life?*

7. *This Bible teaching is to equip all God's people for 'works of service'. What does this mean for church life?*

who ministers?

There is an important lesson from Ephesians 4 for us to learn...

we are ALL ministers!

So, we need to be clear about the role of pastors/teachers in our church family. Their role is not to *replace* the ministry of the people of God, but to *enable* it. The role of full-time ministers is to bring out the ministry of everyone else. Through bible teaching, training and modeling, all God's people must be equipped to serve.

So, we also need to be clear about the role of all God's people in our church family. We all have 'works of service' to do. We all have 'truth in love' to speak. We all have a part to play. We all have a ministry. The Bible teaching we receive is not an end in itself, but is to equip us for service of others.

Unfortunately, an unbiblical idea emerged in the history of the church. It is the idea of 'clergy' and 'laity'. In this model of church there are clergy (who do ministry) and laity (who receive ministry). But it's not the model we see in Ephesians 4 is it?



which model of church?

which of the following models of church is most biblical? which should we follow?

model	mindset	role of minister(s)	role of congregation	impact
MAINTENANCE	'keep things going'	change nothing	receive ministry	things do change! (they decline)
MINISTRY	'we need to grow'	ministers to everyone they can	passive – watching ministry	sometimes some growth
MULTIPLICATION	"we have a mission together"	teaching, training, equipping, modelling	all involved in ministry	true growth (Eph 4:16)



a church of **growth groups**

If the Sunday meeting is the foundation of our life as a church family, our growth groups are the building blocks. The Sunday meeting plays an essential foundational role as we learn together from God's Word. But it provides limited opportunity for the kind of prayer, fellowship and sharing of meals together pictured in Acts 2. And in terms of what we've seen in Ephesians 4, something more is needed for us to all carry out our ministry of 'speaking the truth in love' together (verse 15). Let's look at Ephesians 4 again and think about how being a church of growth groups might answer its call...

how many people can you care for?...

Two people? Three? As many as five? Definitely not more than six!...

This Ephesians 4 picture of a church body is clear: everyone is to be supported. However, something else is also clear: while every part is to be supported, no single part can do this alone. There is a limit to how many people one person can truly care for.

What we are learning here are the principles of 'SPAN OF CARE' It's the idea that:

- everyone is cared for
- no-one cares for too many people

Of course, lots of care happens through relationships in our church family outside of growth groups. Indeed, as we learn to speak the truth in love in our groups, this kind of godly relating should 'spill over' into all sorts of relationships in the church.

A structure of growth groups, gives us great opportunities to develop these attitudes and skills. Not only that, without this structure, some people are inevitably 'lost' in the big group. This is especially true of newcomers and those who don't form relationships easily. Being a church of growth groups helps ensure meeting the 1st principle: everyone is cared for.

Being a church of growth groups also acknowledges the 2nd principle: that no one person can care for too many people. This means that groups must not grow too large (but seed new groups as they grow). It also means that group leaders must be supported/assisted in their role.

The back page discusses what it will mean to be a church of growth groups, a church where no-one stands alone.



look again at **Ephesians 4:11-16**

1. What danger is always around us (verse 14)?

2. How can we avoid this danger (verse 15)?

3. What positive things will then result instead (verses 15-16)?



4. *Doing bible studies together is only the beginning of group life. How can we build on this?*

5. *What will it mean for us to 'speak the truth in love' to each other in our group?*

6. *The whole body is built up in love 'as each part does its work' . What part do you (will you) play in your group?*



which model of growth group?

which is the biblical model for a growth group? why?

truth without love	Know the answers to the questions Be right Focus on information alone
love without truth	Know the answers to personal problems Be real Focus on feelings alone
truth in love	Know the truth about God and me Be honest with God and each other Focus on transformation – becoming like Christ

being a church of growth groups...



a church where no-one stands alone

There's a big difference between just being a church *with* growth groups and a church *of* growth groups. Being just a church *with* growth groups is an approach that says: 'growth groups are there if you want it – just for the keen ones'. Being a church *of* growth groups is an approach that says: 'everyone needs to be cared for, and everyone has a role to play in caring for others'. Being a church of growth groups is not always the easy way. Relationships are hard work. We are called to love each other, not because of how lovable we all are, but because of Christ's love shown to us in his death on the cross. But it's worth it! Being a church of growth groups benefits everyone. It's a great way to fulfil the biblical picture of a connected church family, speaking the truth in love, with every part supported.

newcomers...will be asked to a newcomers group but are also linked to a growth group after their first couple of visits. While we'll all want to welcome every newcomer, it's best if we each know who we're especially responsible for. And it means, hopefully, no-one is overlooked. Your growth group leader might encourage you to ask a newcomer over for a meal, etc. They may not actually attend your group for some time, or may end up in a different group, but the process helps ensure they're welcomed.

links...while attendance at Bible Study may not be possible for some, they're still 'linked' to a group so that they can be part of the care of the group. Without such linking, people who don't attend groups will be overlooked in the care of the church. The group prays for such 'links', seeks to encourage them, offers practical help such as meals, invites them to social activities... generally looks out for them.

growth group members...commit themselves to their group in a number of ways: being there each week; coming with the study prepared; being ready to share honestly; focusing on other's needs, not just our own; extending ministry to others in the group through the week in terms of prayer, hospitality & encouragement; supporting the leader in caring for the group, including 'links'.

group leaders...have overall responsibility for seeing that each member (including links) is being cared for. This does not mean *doing* all the care (which the whole group shares in) but *overseeing* that it happens. They should lead by example. They should also identify and train apprentice leaders. Leaders do much more than simply 'read out the questions'. They will always have in mind all the relationships in the table (below right). They will ensure the group has time not just to 'do the study' but share genuinely and pray about all these relationships. This ministry to the members of their group will obviously also extend beyond the meeting. There are a range of ministry papers (like this one) that they can draw on to equip group members for growing in all these relationships.

apprentice leaders...offer special assistance to the growth group leader in carrying out their role, and so also are at the same time being trained for leading a new group when needed. As groups multiply, there is always the need for more leaders.

coaches...support growth group leaders in their role (talking and praying about how the group is going; sharing how to develop as a leader; offering useful resources for the group, etc). It is vital that leaders are supported well in their important role – so each coach should support only 3 or 4 leaders.

ministers (the Pastor/Teacher kind!)...support growth group leaders through a special focus on coaches. e.g. rather than doing a poor job of trying to support 10 or 20 leaders, they aim to do a great job of supporting a few coaches who each support a few leaders. It all comes back to *span of care*: everyone is cared for; no-one tries to care for too many!

advantages of growth groups

thinking about the picture of church life from Acts 2 we started with, as well as what we've learnt from Eph 4, consider some of the important ways that growth groups can build on our weekly Sunday meeting...

bible study

more opportunity for asking questions, clarifying meaning, and sharing insights

prayer

more opportunity for sharing personal prayer points and praying meaningfully for others. Also provides opportunities for praying for ministries in our church, world mission, etc

accountability

greatly increased as you share struggles with each other and follow-up on these in an ongoing way

support

growth groups act as great support networks - helping each other through difficult times, and sharing each others joys

ministry

great opportunities to serve others - through prayer, encouragement, leadership, etc

training

developing patterns of godly relating. Apprentice leaders trained up.

evangelism

great opportunities for introducing non-Christian friends to a smaller group of people from church (not so much through the Bible study itself, but other activities)

social activities

groups can organise social activities together, providing opportunities for fellowship, relationship-building and evangelism.

through the ministry of our growth groups, all of our relationships can grow...

a growing relationship with **God**, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer

growing relationships with **other believers**, especially through the growth group

growing relationships with those in their **family/household**, as servants

growing relationships with **unbelievers**, especially through personal evangelism

growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team



pastoring a growth

To be a church of growth groups, group leaders need to see themselves as growth group **pastors**, and be trained and supported by pastors/coaches as such.

knowing your sheep by name...

Jesus, the Chief Shepherd of the sheep, knows his sheep: "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me" (John 10:14). Of course, there are some ways in which we are not like Jesus. He is the one who says "I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15) and goes to the cross for the redemption of all who believe in him.

And yet, as 'under-shepherds' of the Chief Shepherd, we are very much to be like Jesus. We also should lay down our lives in service of those in our care. We also should know our sheep. We should get to know them, care for them, be able to account for every one of them.

At a practical level this means knowing who your sheep are. In a church that adopts the linking approach outlined on the opposite page, the 'list' of people in your care might change on a regular basis. This, of course, needs to be managed in a way that isn't disruptive to the group. The point for now, however, is that when changes happen, you need to be on top of it. It's essential to your care that you know who you're caring for!

You and your pastor/coach need to be clear what the process is when changes are made. How and when does this happen? Later in the paper we'll talk a bit more about getting a clear plan for regular communication with your pastor/coach. This is going to be essential if you're going to keep on track with who you're responsible for.

Make sure you carry the list of who's in your care along with contact details, prayer points, etc at all times. It's all part of being an around the clock pastor to your people, rather than just a 'study leader'.

Pastors know their sheep by name. They are shepherds of God's flock under their care.

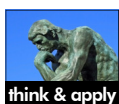


read **1 Peter 5:1-4**

1. What images does Peter give us for the leader and for those being led (verse 2)?

2. What are the right motives for leadership?

3. Who is the Chief Shepherd? Why does Peter remind us of this?



4. Peter seems to use the word 'elder' here in the general sense of leader (he refers to himself as an elder). How might the passage apply to growth group leaders?

5. Peter speaks of the people 'under your care'. How does this take our role as leaders beyond 'reading out the questions' at bible study?

6. The people in your group are ultimately under the care of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd. What difference should this make to how you go about your ministry?



leader or pastor?

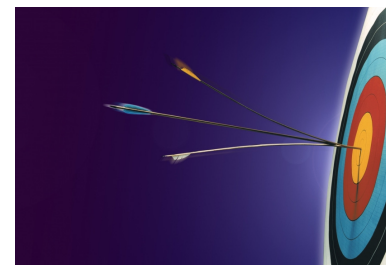
The title doesn't matter but the role sure does. Discuss how the growth group leader role we're learning about here is different to some narrower notions of the 'bible study leader'.

staying on target

The table on the bottom corner of page 4 set out important goals for growth in every believer. Having looked at your role as a pastor in relation to those in your group, it's a good idea to come back and look at the goals again. Work through these goals (below) with your coach, one by one, brainstorming ideas. Think through how you can minister to those in your care, and how group life can be nurtured, so that all of these goals are addressed. Remember, through the ministry of our growth groups, we are aiming for all the important relationships in every believer's life to grow...



- a growing relationship with **God**, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer
- growing relationships with **other believers**, especially in the growth group
- growing relationships with those in their **family/ household**, as servants
- growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through **personal evangelism**
- growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team



meeting one-to-one and ministry papers

A key part of extending your role from bible study leader to pastor is to aim to regularly meet one-to-one with those in your group. People tend to open up even more in the one-to-one context, and there's more opportunity to go deeper into things, and to pray specifically.

Time constraints, of course, may mean you will struggle to do this yourself with every member of your group. That's where assistant/ apprentice leaders can help. It might even be that you focus on meeting one-to-one with two or three people who are potential leaders, and they in turn meet with two or three people each. That way everyone has the opportunity to meet one-to-one, and future leaders are being developed in the process.

The 'meeting one-to-one' ministry paper will give you more ideas about this aspect of your ministry. In particular, it outlines the importance of ministering to the whole person—developing the three strands of theological reflection, personal godliness and ministry skills.

There are other ministry papers that can be a great help to you in trying to address the five goals for all believers discussed on this page

*RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
daily time with God

*RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS
joining a growth group
leading a growth group
hospitality

*RELATIONSHIP WITH FAMILY/
HOUSEHOLD
christian households
marriage preparation
raising kids to follow Jesus

*RELATIONSHIP WITH UNBELIEVERS
personal evangelism
personal apologetics

*RELATIONSHIP WITH CHURCH MISSION
joining a ministry team*



leading the study

So far we have placed great emphasis upon the need to go 'beyond the study' in terms of the life of a group. We have emphasized the need for leaders to go beyond 'reading out the questions', to see themselves as pastors of a small flock. With all that in mind, however, the actual weekly meeting of the group is obviously important. Just as Sunday church is a platform for the growth groups, the weekly meeting of the growth group is the platform for the relationships within the group. We hope group life will be more than once a week, but that's the foundation it's built upon.

stages of groups

It is important to understand the stages that a group goes through. There's a common pattern that many groups follow, going through these stages:

- forming
- storming
- norming
- performing

In the *forming* stage, people are politely getting to know each other and things generally go along pretty smoothly.

In the *storming* stage, people are feeling comfortable enough to express opinions more freely and there may be a degree of conflict.

In the *norming* stage, people are getting to know each other more deeply and so there are fewer surprises in people's reactions. A group's 'personality' is starting to emerge.

In the *performing* stage, the group has got to know each other well enough to be able to express views openly and honestly without fear of rejection.

Clearly a group needs nurturing to negotiate these stages of development. But it's encouraging for us as leaders to know that groups generally go through such stages. It means we shouldn't despair when the 'storming' is happening—it's really a necessary part of group development. Indeed, every time a new member is added, or someone leaves, this stage may be revisited (which also means we need to be careful about such changes when a group has only recently started to perform).



ideas for discussion

the leader as a model

always remember that one of the most important aspects of leadership is example. This applies to your whole life 'outside' of the group context, but also what happens in the group meeting. Your preparation (or lack of it) will be evident to the group and will set the pace for others. The way you use the Bible, listen, follow up on prayer points will all be important. Of course, all this will flow from a leader who truly has a heart to serve their group.

prepare well

we mentioned preparation above. There are many steps behind good preparation. Before the series starts read through the book of the Bible being studied. Take notes and write down questions. Allow God's Word to challenge/encourage you. Each week in the series, read the set passage and have a preliminary look at the study before the Bible Talk on Sunday to get the most out of it. Then work through the study in detail before the group meets. Pray that the study will be fruitful. Give thought to how you will adapt the study best to your group. Think through how the prayer time might unfold and any practical considerations.

generating discussion

often the set questions in a study need follow up questions to generate discussion. Remember to use open-ended questions (questions that can't be answered yes or no). This will be easier if you have prepared well. Try to avoid commenting after every contribution, as this sets up ping-pong back and forth to you as the leader. The goal is open discussion amongst members. On the other hand, however, there is a place for silence as people gather thoughts—don't feel you have to fill it.

back to the bible

one of the best things you can do for your group is to encourage them to look deeper at God's Word. Especially when in 'investigate' questions, ask people where they found their answer in the passage.

time considerations

it's best to have a set start and finish time for the meeting. It may be, for example that an evening group meets 7-9pm. Those who can stay on for a cuppa are welcome to, but those that need to go can get away. People who start work early, for example, may be discouraged from attending if they're concerned the night will run late. Be especially considerate if your group has crèche carers. Within your allocated meeting time, be sure to allow good time for prayer and sharing: have a set goal for when the study itself will be completed.



ideas for discussion

seeding new groups

Ideally as a group grows in membership there will come a time where an apprentice leader can take a couple of members and, along with a couple of newcomers start a new group. This is done best when a group owns this vision for multiplication and has a timeframe in mind when it might happen.

Have you talked and prayed about this with your group?

you need **support**

this paper has discussed extensively your role as leader/pastor. It has called you to love and support the members of your group. But who is going to do that for you? That's where pastors/coaches come into the picture. Use the space below to develop a plan with your coach...



how will you keep in touch?

when and how often will this happen?

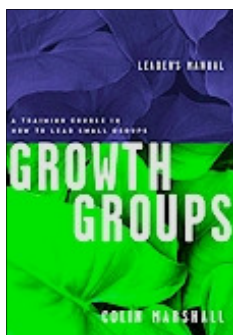
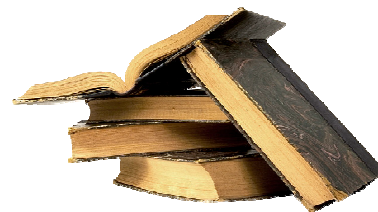
how can prayer be part of your time?

what resources can you look at together?

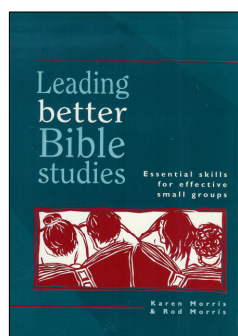
what other needs for support do you have?

useful **resources**

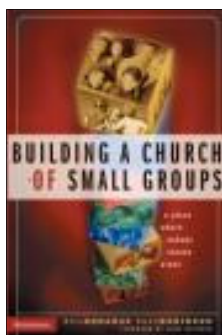
there are lots of books available on growth groups. A couple of the better ones are shown below. In addition to them, it's a good idea for growth group leaders to develop a basic library of general reference type books such as bible commentaries and dictionaries...



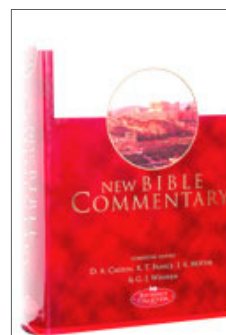
Growth Groups by Colin Marshall is an excellent introduction to the goals of growth groups with a strong emphasis upon the foundational role of God's Word in group life.



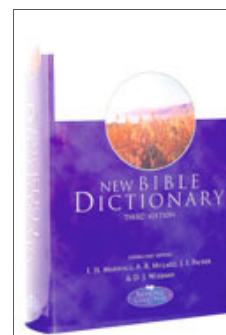
Leading Better Bible Studies by Rod & Karen Morris gives a comprehensive treatment of all aspects of group leadership. It is strong on the mechanics of group life and will stretch you as a leader.



Building a Church of Small Groups by Donahue & Robinson is worth a read for its treatment of the issues of 'span of care' and the need for everyone (including leaders) to be supported.



The New Bible Commentary is a one-volume commentary on the whole Bible. It provides intro material and is an easy point of reference whatever book you're studying.



The New Bible Dictionary is an accessible, comprehensive A - Z of Bible terms, place names, books, people and doctrines. It's a great resource for all leaders.

APPENDIX G. GIVING A TESTIMONY



* giving your testimony

the MINISTRY PAPERS

over a coffee... over the fence... over to you

You know the situation. It's a friend at work. It's the next door neighbour. It's any one of a number of people in your life. The opportunity comes. But often when you least expect it...

"So this whole Christianity and church thing... how did you end up being a Christian anyway?"

Gulp. "Er..."

What comes next? It's a great opportunity. In fact, you might have even prayed for an opportunity like this. But are you prepared for it?

The great news, of course, is that God uses us in our weakness. God delights in using weak vessels to serve his purposes. The God who used a weak and despised cross to bring salvation can certainly use even our stumbling efforts to spread that message of salvation. Before we go any further let's be sure to lock that in. Salvation is God's work, through us.

As we will see in 1 Peter 3, however, that doesn't mean we shouldn't *prepare* ourselves to take such opportunities. We are called to be prepared to explain why our hope is in Christ. We are called to be prepared to give testimony to the hope that is found in Christ alone. There are many good reasons to prepare the story of how God worked in your life to bring you to a saving knowledge of Jesus as your Saviour and Lord.

That's what this ministry paper is all about. We'll discuss what a testimony is, types of testimony, use of testimonies and walk through the process of putting one together. You might still gulp. But hopefully you'll be more prepared for what to say next...

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

Our church has two main 'arms': small groups & ministry teams. This 'giving a testimony' paper relates within the **small groups** arm. It's designed to help your small group leader encourage you to make the most of every opportunity to give the reason for your hope in Christ



investigate

read 1 Peter 3:13-18a

1. What/who are we tempted to fear (verse 14)?

2. How does remembering "Christ as Lord" (verse 15) change who we fear and whose opinion we're concerned about?

3. What sort of question does Peter expect Christians who live with Jesus as Lord to be asked regularly (verse 15)?

4. What should be a significant part of our answer (verse 18a)?

5. Do you consider yourself prepared to "give an answer"?



think &
apply



ideas
for
discussion

Before we go any further into the detail of what a testimony is and how to put one together, the assumption is that you have a testimony to tell—that you are a Christian. Is that the case? Write down in a sentence what you think it means to be a Christian.

not just for **unbelievers**

We have seen the importance of preparing a testimony for sharing with unbelievers about the hope found in Christ. But testimonies aren't just for sharing with unbelievers. They play just as important a role in spurring on other believers. It's always encouraging to hear God has worked in the lives of others. Testimonies remind us that God delights in using ordinary people like you and me to save others, and that he uses the one saving message in hundreds of different ways. Testimonies are great for encouraging each other to keep on with the gospel.



investigate

read Hebrews 10:19-25

1. What does verse 24 call us to consider?

2. What does verse 25 call us to do for each other?

3. What are all the things mentioned in the previous verses (19-23) that should form the basis of this spurring and encouraging?



think &
apply

4. *How might preparing your testimony play a part in this ministry of encouragement to your brothers and sisters in Christ?*

5. *What does this passage remind us should be the focus of how Christians encourage each other?*

EVERY testimony is spectacular...

When we run newcomers courses at church we invite any Christians attending to share their testimonies. It's always an encouraging time to hear how God has worked in different ways in different people's lives.

But sometimes we find that someone might reply, "oh, my testimony's pretty boring really... I just grew up in a Christian family ... learnt the Bible at church ... in fact I can't ever remember a time when I didn't know Jesus. I know my trust is in Jesus for salvation, but it's something that I just sort of grew up into".

Let's be clear: that's a GREAT testimony! That is a great work of God! Far from boring, it's a wonderful encouragement to Christian parents... and to Kids Church teachers and to all of us. It's a fantastic reminder that one of the ways God loves to bring people into his Kingdom is through families.

When Peter preached at Pentecost and invited people to turn to God "in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:28), he went on to say that "the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39). Clearly, as we respond to the message of Christ, a huge part of this response is to share it with our children.

Of course, our children will have to accept or reject this message for themselves. But as Christian parents, we are given the great privilege and great responsibility to raise our children to know Jesus. And the least boring thing – the most exciting thing imaginable – would be to hear them say one day, "oh ... I grew up in a Christian family...".

Every testimony is spectacular!



ideas for
discussion

what is a testimony?

At a "testimonial dinner", honour is given to the life and work of a significant person. A testimony is about giving honour to God pointing to the life and work of his Son as we tell the story of how we became a Christian.

Look at your answer in the previous 'ideas for discussion' on page 1. Did it point to Jesus and his death on the cross as both 1 Peter 3 and Hebrews 10 did?



it's all about Jesus

This page walks you through some principles for preparing a testimony. But let the most important one be stated up front: it's all about Jesus. While a testimony is your story, it's ultimately his story, especially of how he died to bring you forgiveness. You don't have to give a full gospel exposition but it's tragic to hear testimonies that fail to focus on Jesus and his death. Let's not forget that it's all about Jesus.

a sample testimony

BEFORE: I grew up in a church-going family & I went along to Sunday School until I was about 10 when my parents gave us the choice of whether we wanted to go to church or not. It was a simple choice because church was boring and so that was it for me and church. But it wasn't quite it for me and *God*. Although my behaviour was getting further from his ways I couldn't shake a sneaking suspicion that he was *there*. Problem was, the God I thought was there was one that I thought was against me. If I could sum up my life before belonging to Jesus it'd be in the word "guilt".

AFTER: If I could describe my life now that I belong to Jesus it would be "free". I live with a sense of being set free from that guilt. I live with the knowledge that God is for me not against me. I live my life thankful for what he has done for me in Jesus.

That brings me to **WHAT BROUGHT THIS TURN AROUND:** It's definitely not that my behaviour has suddenly become perfect, far from it. No, the difference didn't come from *my* behaviour or something I managed to do. It came from hearing about the behaviour of someone *else*. I'm talking about Jesus.

When I was about fifteen I was invited on a youth camp where I heard some talks on the "I am" statements of Jesus: I am the way the truth and the life; I am the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep; I am the resurrection and the life. It was amazing to be confronted with Jesus and his claims about himself and his claims on me. I learnt that God *was* angry with me, and yet that Jesus took that anger on himself at the cross, providing the way back to God—to be forgiven for running from God. It wasn't through my behaviour but Jesus' perfect life given in my place. That's an offer I couldn't refuse. And that's what changed my life.

how to give a testimony

A basic model for a testimony is like the 'Before and After' ads on TV. Paul talks this way in Ephesians 2:1-10: "*You were... but God... and now*". Paul tells their 'before' and 'after' story describing their lives before and after knowing Christ. And he keeps the focus on the thing that has made the difference: the gospel. It's a great 3-point pattern for a testimony:

1. Describe what life was like **before** you became a Christian.
2. Describe what life is like **now** you are a Christian.
3. Describe how the change came about: tell the **gospel**.

Notice that this model means you finish with the gospel. That's the real strength of it. The last thing you talk about, and therefore what you'll leave people thinking about, is the gospel of Jesus.

Maybe you can come up with a theme from your life that you can hang the gospel on e.g. the woman who was a citizen of two countries, had two weddings one in a Presbyterian church and one in a Greek Orthodox church, and who had two births: the physical one and the spiritual one.

don't

- ...be too long aim to get your testimony down to 3 minutes (that means 300 words for the average person—the example in the sidebar is 350)
- ...use jargon (have a go at the testimony jargon cart below)
- ...make yourself the main focus—it's a testimony to Jesus

do

- ...begin with a bang...and end with a bang
- ...keep it personal—remember it's a story not a sermon

testimony jargon chart

try to think of another way of describing each of the following

Sin		Christian	
Faith		Grace	
Justification		Saved	



making opportunities

We started this paper thinking about making the most of opportunities to talk about the hope found in Jesus. The problem is that often we don't see the opportunities right in front of us. All the things that make up our everyday conversations over a coffee or over the fence can be easily turned into gospel conversations. **Below is an example to get you started...**

video testimonies

We have seen that we all need to be prepared to give an answer for our hope in Christ, not fearing people but remembering that Jesus alone is our Lord and it's him we obey. We have also seen that testimonies can be a great encouragement to the church and we should be regularly spurring one another on with the stories of God's work in our lives, bringing us to forgiveness through Jesus.

Testimonies in our Sunday gatherings can be especially encouraging to the whole body. Problem is, if some of us are tempted to be fearful about the thought of sharing our testimony one-to-one, the thought of sharing it to a large group of people can be overwhelming.

This is where video testimonies can be so useful. At first the thought of being on camera might sound just as intimidating. But most people find that it's a different story once you give it a go. The opportunity to be able to have a few goes at it or do the testimony one section at a time takes a lot of pressure off.

We all have a testimony to tell but we don't all feel equally gifted at telling it. Editing video material enables a flowing and clear story to be told. It can have greater impact than something that's too drawn out, and the fear of freezing in front of the crowd is now only there for the tech guy! It's not that the goal is to be slick, but it helps everyone rejoice in the work of God when a clear flowing story is given. Give it a go!

Testimony Interview

Another option for a testimony in church is through an interview:

1. What were you like before you came to know Jesus?
2. What is life like now that you are a Christian?
3. What made the difference? Tell us how you came to know Jesus as your Lord and Saviour?

"How about the price of petrol?"

Sorry to mention that. Or am I the only one sick of hearing about the price of petrol? And sick of *talking* about the price of petrol? And sick of endless speculation about the *future* price of petrol? "Not as sick as I am of paying for the stuff!", you might say. True. As an average tank approaches the \$100 mark, that hurts. And the shopping voucher hardly dents it at all.

We're funny creatures though. A lot of wealth has come into this country through the 'world resources boom'. No complaints there, right? But when that same boom (as I understand it, anyway) is a significant part of pushing up the blow at the bowser, the complaints gush forth. There's a strange part of us that somehow expects the world to become a better place, despite the evidence! Don't get me wrong. I'd love the prices to drop, not rise. Bring back the 43 cents per litre I paid when I was on my Ps in 1986! And I know for some families at SCPC, especially where work is tightly connected to fuel prices, the costs are far greater than just the tank for the family car. These events are very much hurting some financially.

But it is a vivid reminder about the fickle nature of this world. Indeed, the majority of people in this world are facing far greater hardship than fuel price hikes. And whoever we are on this planet, rich or poor, we all live in a world that is passing away. In 1 Corinthians in coming weeks, we'll hear Apostle Paul urging "those who use the things of this world", to live "as if not engrossed in them, for this world in its present form is passing away" (1 Corinthians 7:31). I wouldn't know if we're about to start exhausting the world's oil resources or if it's just political games. But I do know for certain that they won't last forever. This world IS passing away. And this whole world will then face something far more drastic than a nasty fuel bill - giving account to God for their response to his precious Son's death for us (Hebrews 9:27). You wouldn't want to have your trust in anything in this world, would you? But trust rather in the one who, by his death and resurrection, carries you to the new creation.

So, as much as it hurts to see that climbing price on the servo signage, perhaps direct that frustration into something useful: the desire to tell people about eternal salvation through Jesus beyond this groaning world.



ideas
for
discussion

now try writing an outline for your testimony...

Grab a piece of paper and start writing under these 3 headings:

1. Describe what life was like **before** you became a Christian.
2. Describe what life is like **now** you are a Christian.
3. Describe how the change came about: tell the **gospel**.



*high school lunchtime ministry

the MINISTRY PAPERS

missed opportunities...

Kevin is the leader of a high school lunchtime group. He has just finished leading the group for the year and is really happy with how it went. He had over forty students coming, they always had a great time and were always keen to invite their friends. It had been a great year but Kevin did have a troubling thought in the back of his mind. He really wished they had opened up the Bible and talked about **Jesus**...

10 years later at the high school reunion...

Kevin has often prayed for the guys and girls who had attended his lunchtime group. Now was his chance to see how they were going. When Kevin got to the reunion he noticed everyone had gained a few kilos. But even sadder than that, all of them had forgotten about Jesus (although it's hard to forget the gospel if you've never really heard it). As soon as they had left school they had quickly worked out that parties, drugs, alcohol and sex are heaps more fun than playing games. There was no foundation for them to hold onto when temptation came their way.

Kevin went home from the reunion a sad man. All the time he had put into preparing games had counted for nothing. As he reflected on his ministry he really wished that he had told the students the life saving message of the gospel even if some of them had stopped coming. He realised too late that it would have been better to save some rather than none at all...

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: **'the ministry training church'** and **'meeting one to one'**.

There are two main 'arms' of a healthy church: small groups and ministry teams. This **high school lunchtime ministry** paper relates to the **ministry teams** arm. It's designed to help your high-school ministry team leader introduce you to what it means to be part of serving in the high-school ministry team at our church. It's much more than a training tool, it's all about relationships: who you minister *for*, who you minister *with*, and who you minister *to*...



investigate

Ephesians 4 is a great starting point for all our ministry teams...

read **Ephesians 4:1-16**

1. Who are we ultimately ministering *for*? Explain.

2. What do we learn here about those we minister *with*?

3. What do we learn here about those we minister *to*?

4. We must 'speak the truth in love'. What is this? Why is it crucial?

5. What personal challenges are you aware of in terms of playing your part in this ministry team?

6. What role will being actively involved in a small group play in enabling you to carry out this ministry well?



think &
apply

APPENDIX H. PERSONAL EVANGELISM



*personal evangelism

the MINISTRY PAPERS

on a mission...

Jesus commanded his disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" [Matthew 28:19-20].

This 'Great Commission' sets out two goals for a church:

- ✦ to REACH people for Christ; &
- ✦ to TEACH them to follow him

The same ideas are found in Paul's words in Colossians:

"We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ". [Colossians 1:28].

A good mission statement will clearly express these two main aims for a church family, e.g.:

- ✦ present Christ to everyone
- ✦ present everyone mature in Christ

Of course, these two aims are always related. It's the same gospel that underpins both aims. The gospel of forgiveness and eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the basis of both our evangelism (reaching unbelievers) and our edification (teaching believers).

✦ evangelism

proclaiming the gospel to unbelievers
[present Christ to everyone]

✦ edification

teaching believers to live the gospel
[present everyone mature in Christ]

As we seek to live out this two-fold mission together as a church, our bible study small groups are a vital part of making it happen (see the 'joining a small group' paper). Not only are small groups vital for edification, they are also vital in the area of personal evangelism. It is through small groups that we can get equipped, encourage each other, pray for each other and keep each other accountable in the area of personal evangelism.

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.



investigate

read Luke 24:13-27; 44-49

1. What events have just taken place in Jerusalem?

2. What events does Jesus say the entire Old Testament pointed to (verses 26-27, 44-47)?

3. What events are the apostles witnesses to?

4. As a result, what message were they to preach?



think & apply

5. Why is it important to see that the death and resurrection of Jesus is the focus of the whole Bible?

6. Why is proclaiming Jesus' death and resurrection at the heart of following Jesus?



ideas for discussion

In your context, what opportunities are there to proclaim Christ?

- ✦
- ✦
- ✦
- ✦

know the gospel

The great event of his death and resurrection is the focus of the whole Bible. Everything that came before this event, pointed forward to it. And we who live after this event, are to proclaim it. Everyone's real problem is their rejection of God. The only solution is God's forgiveness through the death and resurrection of his Son. As Christians, this message demands not only our belief... it demands our witness! As 1 Peter 3:15 says, we need to "always be ready to speak of the hope we have in Christ".

Try working through the 'Two Ways to Live Bible Study'. When you're finished, use the spaces below to put into your own words each of the six points covered in the gospel outline. Go over it a few times until you can do it from memory.

1 God the loving ruler and creator Revelation 4:11

2 Humanity in rebellion Romans 3:10-12

3 God won't let people keep on rebelling forever Hebrews 9:27

4 Jesus, the man who dies for rebels 1 Peter 3:18

5 Jesus, the risen ruler Philippians 2:9-11

6 The Two Ways to Live John 3:36



"I don't know what to say..."

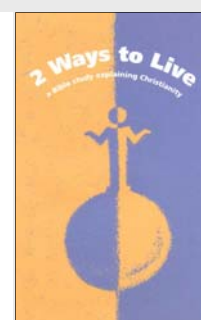
Knowing what to say comes down to being prepared: knowing the gospel. But even when we're clear in our heads what the gospel is – it's not always easy to put it into words when the opportunity arrives!...

That's where gospel outlines like 'Two Ways to Live' are useful tools. It summarises the whole Bible message really well. It captures the Bible's focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus. It also leads to a clear statement of the choice people have to make in response to the gospel.

It's really worth your while getting to know an outline like this. You can put it into your own words and adapt the way you use it from person to person or situation to situation. But the great benefit it gives you is a few clear steps in your head that you can work through – and know that you've covered the essential points of the gospel.

The Bible Study format of 'Two Ways to Live' (pictured below – available from Matthias Media) is great to take people through. It has a few basic questions and takes only about half an hour to work through with someone.

Of course, there are some other good gospel outlines around you might prefer to use. In the end, these things are only tools. But choose your tools well – make sure any outline you use has its focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus.





tell the gospel

I hate aerobics. There's a big difference between aerobics and soccer training, for example. The difference is this: Thursday night soccer training is put into practice on Saturday when you play the game. Aerobics, on the other hand, only leads to more aerobics... never ending practice! Learning gospel outlines must never be like aerobics: all sweat but no outworking. Evangelistic training must be preparation for the *real game*. As Christians, we must not only know the gospel, but tell the gospel. The passages below will help remind us why...

"I don't know when to say it ..."

Knowing when to share the gospel with someone is something many of us struggle with. We can be worried about rejection, or about seeming too pushy. However, while a few of us may err on the side of being too 'in your face', most of us err in the other direction! There are a few important things that can help us here:

- remember that sharing the gospel isn't doing something terrible to someone! Rather, it's doing them a favour, like giving them a gift – the greatest gift!
- try not to focus on your own fears but on the other person's needs – this is a message they need to hear.
- realise that most people are actually more willing to hear about Christ than we've guessed they might be.
- when you're getting to know someone, don't leave it too long to bring up your Christian faith. It can get harder to broach the subject the longer you leave it.
- often our conversations with friends about Jesus are very 'bits and pieces'. Ask them if they'd mind getting the 'big picture' - doing a short study like the Two Ways to Live Bible Study.
- remember that it's ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit to change someone's heart towards God. So speak with confidence knowing that their response doesn't rest on your cleverness.
- especially in the light of the previous point, above all PRAY. It's our job to speak, but God's job to save people!



investigate

read Romans 10:10-15

1. How is someone saved (verse 10)?

2. Who is this salvation for (verses 11-13)?

3. What is needed for people to have the opportunity to be saved (verses 14-15)?

4. Who played a key part in your salvation? How?

5. Could God use you in this way? Why/why not?



think & apply



investigate

read Colossians 4:2-6

1. What does Paul want the Colossians to pray for (verses 2-3)?

2. Why is he concerned that his preaching be clear (verse 4)?

3. What does he mean by 'making the most of every opportunity' (verse 5)?

4. Why does he want our conversation to be dominated by grace (verse 6)?

5. What should fill our prayers in relation to non-Christians?

6. How can we make our message as clear as possible?

7. How can we make the most of every opportunity we have?

8. How can our conversation be dominated by God's grace?



think & apply



keeping the main thing the main thing...

In this study we've seen how vital it is to share the gospel with others. This is something that needs to be part of every aspect of our lives. We need to think about making sure evangelism is a top priority in everything we do as a church family: our Sunday meetings, our small groups, and our lives through the week. The main thing, the gospel message of the death and resurrection of Jesus, must always be the main thing!

idiot-proof church

In 1 Corinthians 14:23-25 Apostle Paul makes it clear that church meetings aren't just for Christians. He talks about the "unbeliever who does not understand" - who may come along to one of our meetings. In the Greek the word is 'idiotes', meaning unskilled, a layman. Paul is very concerned that the meeting be clear to this outsider: idiot-proof, so they may understand the gospel, turn and be saved. The gospel must always be clear and central to our meetings. But what else would we focus on anyway? After all, it's being reminded of the great gospel of Christ that encourages Christians as well - so everyone benefits from keeping the main thing, the main thing! We all grow in the same soil - gospel soil. We need to work hard at making sure our church meetings are user-friendly welcoming to outsiders: (clearly explaining things, avoiding jargon, etc). Our hard work in personal evangelism can be undone if church isn't inviting.

invest and invite

Speaking of inviting, remember that simply inviting people to outreach events or church any Sunday is a great way to put people in a situation where they'll hear the gospel. Although we should all be prepared to share the gospel ourselves, evangelism is also a team thing. If there's a gifted evangelist speaking at an event, invite your friend along. But remember, the likelihood of them accepting your invitation is often connected to how much you've invested in them: time, energy, genuine friendship. That means building relationships so you can "invest & invite". Have a look at the hospitality ministry paper for more thoughts on this.

words or actions?

Some people think that living a good Christian life is the same as telling someone the gospel. This is not true. But the two things are connected. We need to avoid *two errors*:

1. **living but not speaking**: this won't save anyone. People will just think you're a nice person.
2. **speaking but not living**: people might be saved but it will be despite you! More often than not you will do harm to their understanding of the gospel.

We need to do both things: live a good Christian life so that our life doesn't detract from the message; and also *tell* the Christian message. Think of your life as like a signpost: your **ACTIONS** are the signpost, pointing to Jesus and the fact that he is Lord of your life; your **WORDS** add writing on to the signpost. This means people can now actually see where your life is pointing - and why. Rather than leaving it to people to guess why your life is different, you need to tell them. So, words **AND** actions are needed - working together to point to Christ.

all of life

We need to make it our goal to be making friends for life. This means that in all our relationships, we allow *the greatest* relationship - the one we have with God through Christ - to have its influence. We want our friends to have this great relationship with God too! Most Christians know lots of non-Christians, but for a variety of reasons we've stopped seeing them as such. What we need to do is stop and think and pray - and try to make them more than just friends or acquaintances - we need to make them "Friends for Life"! We need to share with them the message of forgiveness through Jesus as clearly as possible. If we don't stop and think and pray like this ... it tends not to happen at all. Why not finish this study by talking and praying about who you can share the life-giving gospel of Christ with?

plan to share the gospel with someone this week... pray about it... do it... share with your small group how you went... pray some more... do it...

small groups and accountability

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:24-25

The table below shows a number of key goals that our small groups are aiming for as we seek to encourage each other. It's all about relationships. The small group is a context in which we can be accountable for all the important relationships in our lives.

Evangelism is all about the relationships we have with unbelievers. So it needs to be kept on the top of the agenda in our small groups. We need to regularly talk together about how we're going sharing the gospel. We need others to keep us accountable about how we're going at taking gospel opportunities. Most of all, we need to pray for each other - that we'd stand up for Jesus. Small groups provide the opportunity to pray specifically in this way.

Of course, our small group meetings are not usually the best place for direct evangelism. But it's a good idea for your group to do social activities together that you can ask non-Christian friends along to. It's about relationships building other relationships... for the ultimate: a relationship with God.



a growing relationship with **God**, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer

growing relationships with **other believers**, especially through the small group

growing relationships with those in their **family/household**, as servants

growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through **personal evangelism**

growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team

APPENDIX I. WALK-UP EVANGELISM

Walk-up Evangelism

What is it?

By 'walk-up evangelism', we mean what it says - walking up to someone and sharing the gospel. Other descriptions have been used in recent times, contact evangelism, stranger evangelism and so forth.

Why do it?

1. It provides good opportunities for gospeling. If we go to the right places, there are always people willing to talk and listen. On some occasions contacts are willing to be followed up with Bible study and coming to church.
2. It is the easiest way to get going in evangelism.
3. It is one of the best ways to train others in evangelism. It is ideal 'on-the-job' training: watching an experienced personal evangelist, having a go and getting feedback. We grow in confidence in the gospel and in our personal skills. We develop lots of skills - starting conversations, building rapport, presenting the gospel, answering questions. We learn more in 30 minutes of doing evangelism than in a week of classes.
4. Those who are doing walk-up evangelism are usually talking to friends about the gospel. By approaching strangers, presenting the gospel and seeking to persuade, our commitment to Christ and the gospel is heightened. We are 'radicalised' as Christ's disciples, out in the market place, representing Him, 'going public' if you like. It is often a defining moment for both young and old Christians. We are acknowledging Him before men (Matt 10:32-33), confessing Him with our mouth (Rom 10:9-10). As a result we are more likely to speak up with friends, family and acquaintances. Many of the skills learnt in the more 'formal' evangelism equip us for the more 'relational' evangelism.
5. To regain the initiative from the cults who have majored on this approach and grown as a result.
6. For those approaching full-time ministry it is an invaluable training ground. We learn about all kinds of people, how to approach them, their attitudes to Christianity and skills in communicating the gospel.

Why we don't do it

There are all sorts of reasons offered for not evangelising this way: it is not the best strategy, there is little follow-up, if done badly it can be offensive, people think we are from the cults, we should only evangelise friends, it just doesn't work.

The basic reason is fear: fear of the unknown, embarrassment, not knowing what to say. For people at the shy end of the spectrum it can be excruciating.

Where to do it

Generally, the best places to practise walk-up evangelism, are places where people are sitting around, reasonably relaxed, and not too crowded to be inhibited in talking. There are many possible contexts including parks, streets, shopping centres, beaches and door-to-door. We can also target particular areas to make it more strategic, near our church or reaching a specific ethnic group.

How to do it

In one sense our own personalities will shape how we approach people. But if we are training others in evangelism, we need a simple, fairly structured approach which others can imitate to get started.

1. Opening gambit

Identify who you are openly and gain permission to engage in conversation.

" We are Christians from (church, ministry), finding out what people know about Christianity and discussing it"

" We are from (church, ministry). Could we get your opinion on three questions about God and talk about it with you?"

2. Build rapport

Spend a few moments swapping names, finding out about their religious background and looking for common ground. Anything that builds a bridge of relationship and trust is important. It may be that you grew up in the same area, went to the same school, know someone in common, saw the same movie, read the same book, share a pet hate. Anything that breaks the ice and says you are a real person with a genuine interest in them.

3. Ask questions

What is your view of God?

Who in your opinion is Jesus?

What is a real Christian?

What is the future of the world?

What happens when we die?

4. Present a gospel outline

"Let me give you a summary of Christianity which answers these questions"

Present the gospel early in the conversation. It is the preaching of the Cross that persuades, not our arguments. Having clearly set out the gospel, we can answer their questions by further explaining the gospel. A visual presentation often works best.

5. Handle responses

There can be a whole range of responses at this point from faith to hostility. To some, the gospel is the aroma of life, to others the stench of death. There are some broad principles in handling responses.

i) Keep leading the conversation to the central issues of the gospel, who Jesus is and our salvation won on the Cross.

ii) Work out the question behind the question. Philosophical objections often but not always mask a more fundamental moral problem, an unwillingness to repent of sin. Emotional reactions might derive from deep hurt in life, including bad experiences with religion.

iii) You can sometimes get to the real problem by asking: "if I could answer that question, would you become a Christian?"

6. Purchase proposition

We are not sales people but ambassadors for the Lord Jesus Christ. However this aspect of marketing is helpful. The good sales person will make a clear proposition at the end of the conversation, inviting the 'prospect' to make a definite response. In our evangelism, we often stop short of making a specific proposition or invitation, usually because of some lurking fear. The fundamental proposition is: would you become a Christian? But there are other steps we can lay before people, appropriate to their stage: let's meet again, do a Bible study, read this book, listen to a tape, come to church.

7. Follow up

Those who accept some invitation need to be diligently followed-up. If they wish to withdraw at some point, respect their freedom in the matter. We must never harass people.

Some practical tips

1. The initial approach must be positive, confident and honest. It is best to approach people who don't appear to be busy. Avoid anything that creates a negative impression. For example, don't sneak up on people from behind, don't surround them with one of you on either side and don't work your way along a line of people who are watching you approach others.
2. Show integrity at all times. Never manipulate or pressure people, always stick to the time they have agreed to give you. If you can't answer their question, just say so.
3. In training others, you might set a limited goal for some sessions of evangelism. On one occasion you might work at how to discover people's attitude to Christianity. On another occasion you might work at the purchase proposition. You don't have to master all the methodology in one step. You can also share different parts of the conversation.

Resources

Personal Evangelism, Matthias Media

APPENDIX J. MEETING ONE TO ONE



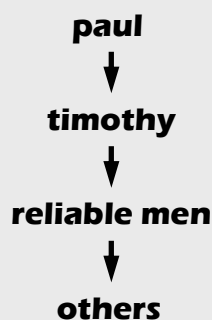
★ meeting one to one

the MINISTRY PAPERS

teach a man to fish?

We have long ago taken hold of the idea that we need to do more than give a man a fish... we need to teach him to fish. But there's another step needed when it comes to ministry ... we need to teach others to teach others to fish. In 2 Timothy 2 we see Paul teaching Timothy to teach others to teach others...

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2).



A vital principle guiding these MINISTRY PAPERS is the notion of 'span of care': how many people one person can care for? e.g. a small group leader can care for up to six people, but a larger group will need an assistant. The same principle applies to our ministries. e.g. rather than a youth group leader trying to care for thirty young people, it's better for them to train and support five other leaders, who each care for six young people each.

The issue here might be called 'span of training' - how many people can you train? So, while Ephesians 4 challenges pastors to train everyone, 2 Timothy 2 reminds us that this will only be achieved through a chain of one-to-one relationships. Everyone is a trainer. Everyone is a trainee.

'the ministry training church' paper introduced the big picture of the training model adopted in these MINISTRY PAPERS, focusing on the role of pastor-teachers. This paper '**meeting one to one**' fills out the relational aspects of the model, and broadens the focus to the role of other key leaders. It is vital background for all coaches/leaders before looking at their specific small group or ministry papers.



read 1 Timothy 4

1. What will happen in later times?

2. What does Paul say Timothy's response to this should be?

3. What role should knowing the truth play for Timothy?

4. What role should godliness play for Timothy?

5. What role should using his gifts play?

6. What do you think Paul means by "progress" in verse 15?



think &
apply



ideas for
discussion

what will it mean for you to make progress?

★ knowing the **truth**?

★ growing in **godliness**?

★ using your **gifts**?

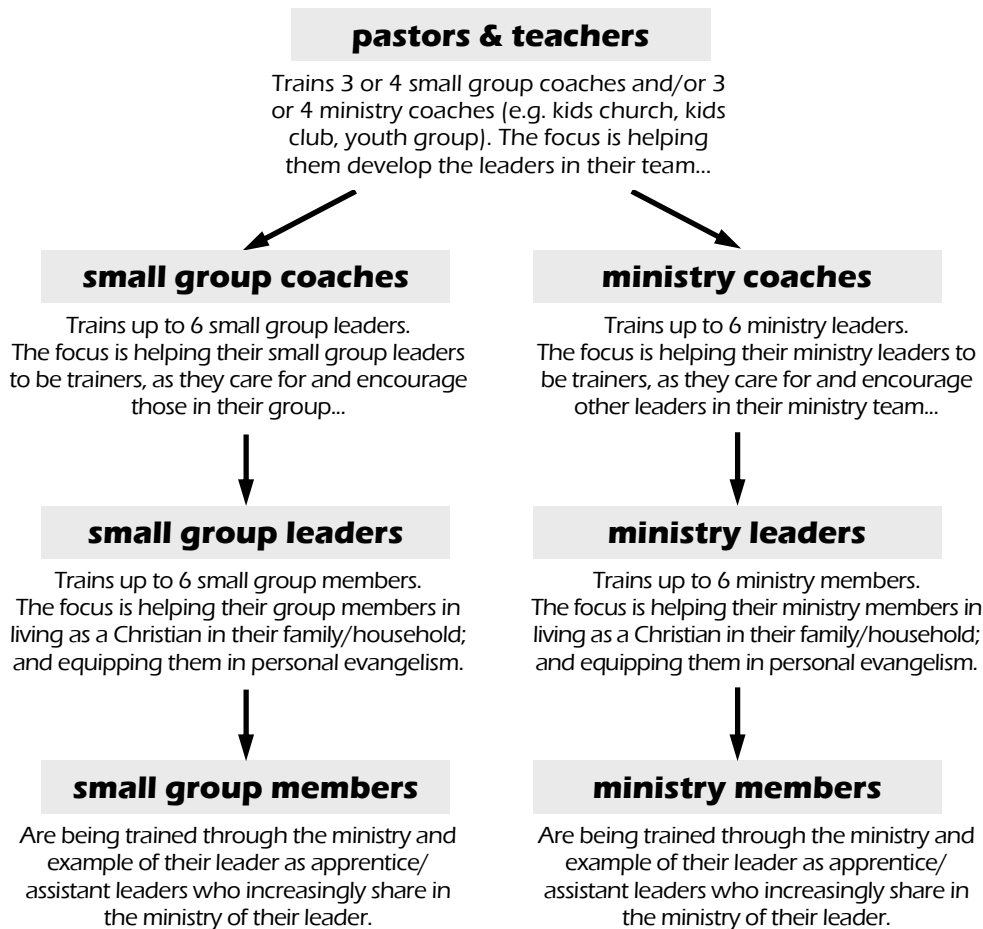
you will expand on these notes when doing the exercise on page 3

training relationships

Training is often approached in a scatter-gun way. Read this book here, go to that event there, get together when we can. The hope is that the cumulative value will sort of add up. But often the sum of the parts is far less than something whole. Fundamentally, training isn't just events. It isn't just books. It isn't just bits and pieces. Training is relationships...



who's training who?



remember the goals

These MINISTRY PAPERS have been developed with a certain 'shape' of Christian maturity in mind. The mature Christian in our church will live out and grow in their Christlikeness through...

1. being actively involved in a **small group**
2. being actively involved in a **ministry team**

The small group is the primary goal. Within the small group a number of objectives can be met. Indeed, as the table shows, all relationships in the believer's life are addressed through the small group.

a growing relationship with God , especially through personal Bible reading and prayer
growing relationships with other believers , especially through the small group
growing relationships with those in their family/household , as servants
growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through personal evangelism
growing relationships with the whole church in mission, serving in a ministry team

and how...

So far we have a relationship diagram. But we don't yet have relationships! It's what happens *within* the structure that's all-important. The structure has value: it puts everyone in a position to be trained/cared for. But unless those within the structure have a sense of what they're doing, it amounts to nothing. Here's a few key thoughts in moving from diagram to reality...

one-to-one

The training model is built upon the concept of span of care/training. It allows each person to have a realistic number of people to care for/train. Unless the trainer can meet with their trainees one-to-one on a regular basis (e.g. at least an hour per week), the model fails.

teams

As well as catering for one-to one training relationships, the model also provides scope for peer-to-peer team relationships. So, for example, the pastor-teacher might meet weekly with each small group coach, but also get all the coaches together once a month.

modeling

pastors/teachers need to be devoted to these training relationships. If they give only token support to coaches/leaders then the same token effort will be modeled throughout the structure.

the whole person

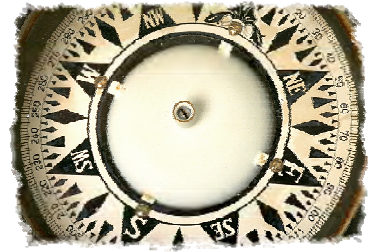
1 Timothy 4 (study on page 1) showed us how integrated training needs to be: theological development, personal godliness, growth in gifts. Head, heart and hands. The whole person. Although the training relationship might have a specific focus, e.g. youth ministry, to really grow as a youth group leader is to grow in all these areas. Indeed, if we abstract skills from godliness, we train dangerous people! Page 3 is a great tool for setting 'whole person' goals in a one-to one relationship... review it at least annually...

<div> <div>theol. reflection</div> <div>godliness</div> <div>ministry skills</div> </div>	what areas to be addressed?	how you will do it? (reading, tasks, ministries, etc)	what should progress look like?	what happened? what progress made?
	★			
	★			
	★			
	★			
	★			
	★			
	★			
	★			
	★			

'be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress' 1 Timothy 4:15

training pathway

The worksheet on page 3 provides a great tool for personalising one-to-one training. It helps keep training flexible: responding to the individual. It also helps keep training wholistic: theology, godliness, and skills. With all that in mind, however, it can be helpful, to develop some sort of standard training pathway people can follow. It provides a starting point of ideas for how to make progress. It can then be shaped and adapted from situation to situation. There are certain key topic areas and tools that are useful for everyone.



Below is a possible 'curriculum' or pathway for training (see 'the ministry training church'). Depending on the person, units could be done on a semester or a yearly timetable. Be flexible, using the one-to-one planner, and then decide how that might gel with the pathway below.

	aims	tasks	reading	min. paper
intro	establish one-to-one relationship	one-to-one planner	the Bible short steps for long gains Guidance and the voice of God Phil Jensen & Tony Payne	meeting one to one
1	connect to small group	join small group	A Fresh Start John Chapman A Call to Spiritual Reformation Don Carson	joining a small group
2	get involved in ministry	basic roster tasks	Know & Tell the Gospel John Chapman Gospel & Kingdom Graeme Goldsworthy	personal evangelism Christian households
3	teaching the Bible to others	join ministry team	Intro to the Bible (Moore correspondence) Their God is so Big Stephanie Carmichael No Guts no Glory Ed Vaughan & Al Stewart	kids church ministry kids club ministry youth group ministry
4	growing in ministry mindset	other ministry tasks/teams	Knowing God JI Packer Children's Talks Sandy Galea The Experience Trap Kel Willis	kids talks music ministry welcoming ministry
5	'passing it on' - one-to-one ministry	start meeting one-to-one, to mentor someone else	The Blueprint Matthias Media The Story of the Church Alan Harman Inside Out Larry Crabb	meeting one-to-one
6	leadership roles	trained as assistant small group leader	Growth Groups Col Marshall Building a church of small groups Donahue Leading Better Bible Studies Rod & Karen Morris	leading a small group leading church
7	teaching roles	write a bible study prepare a gospel talk	Giving the Talk [video] John Chapman Biblical Preaching Haddon Robinson Preaching the whole Bible Graeme Goldsworthy	preaching that connects

who cares?

The training model presented in these two introductory papers, 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one' is built around two basic goals. Let's state them one more time just to be sure they're clear:

1. being actively involved in a **small group**
2. being actively involved in a **ministry team**

Every believer, ideally, is part of a small group and part of a ministry team. The consequence of this, clearly, is that every believer has two main leaders they relate to: their small group leader and their ministry leader.

An important question to clarify then is: who cares? Which of these leaders has primary care for the person? Who takes main responsibility for encouraging their growth in the three strands of theological reflection, ministry skills and personal godliness.

It is important to see that while there are two goals, the small group goal is primary. Joining a ministry team is only one of five objectives the small group addresses. And that's the point: even the involvement in the ministry team ideally emerges from the small group leader helping the person identify needs in the church their gifts can be applied to. In this way, the small group leader is the primary carer for the person.

Of course, the small group leader needs to have contact with the ministry leader to help fulfil this role of care. And in terms of the ministry skills strand, the ministry leader will play a significant role. But there may be other aspects of ministry that the small group leader will be working on too.

With this key role of small group leaders again before us, it's another reminder that these leaders need support from pastors/coaches. And they need assistance from other mature Christians in their group to carry out their ministry effectively.

APPENDIX K. GIVING A SHORT TALK



giving a short talk

the MINISTRY PAPERS

'it's only a short talk'

You've been asked to "do the devotion" on Friday night at Youth Group. Or you're a mentor to the young mums group and you've been asked to "share some of your wisdom with us". Or you're a growth group leader and you've been encouraged that it'd be good to "give a fireside yarn" at the group's weekend away. They come in all shapes and sizes. They're the occasions where you're asked to step up and "give a short talk".

Leaders often find it hard to recruit people for this challenge. Speaking in front of others is up there with snakes and spiders for some. Most of us just don't feel equipped for it. For this reason the invitation to speak often comes with efforts at downplaying the challenge. The encouragement is given that "it's only a short talk". Perhaps we're being told: "the pain really won't last that long"! Hopefully what we're not being told is: "shorter talks don't really take any preparation... just wing it like I do".

Ask an experienced public speaker and they'll tell you that shorter talks often require more preparation. If you have to say it clearly in a few minutes or so, you have to be even clearer what the it is that you're saying. You have to be prepared.

For some of us the temptation is to over-prepare. We lack direction. We charge in and start writing only to find ourselves continually writing and re-writing. This paper is for you, helping you to think through how to prepare a talk. For others of us the temptation is to under-prepare. We leave it far too late. Or we just hope something will "come to me" when we get up to speak. This paper is for you, helping you to think through how to prepare a talk. Short or long, every occasion where God's Word is spoken is a precious opportunity to honour Jesus and connect people to him. It's definitely worth preparing for.

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

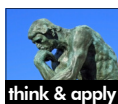
Connect. Grow. Serve. After **connecting** to God through trusting in Christ, a vital way we can **grow** is through a growth group and a vital way we can **serve** is through a ministry team. This MINISTRY PAPER is designed to help your ministry leader train you for giving a short talk as a part of the ministry of that team. For full length sermons refer to the '**preaching that connects**' paper. '**Giving a short talk**' draws on that paper applying many of the same principles to shorter talks.



read **1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5**

1. What is the centre of all Paul's preaching?

2. Paul clearly covers a lot of subjects in this letter. What does he mean, then, that he only preaches "Christ and him crucified"?



3. Why is it important that you proclaim "Christ and him crucified", whatever the topic or passage your talk is covering?



read **1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

4. What is *flexible* in Paul's approach to ministry?

5. What is *fixed* in Paul's approach to ministry?



6. What must be *fixed* about your talk, whatever the context?

7. What must be *flexible* about your talk, according to the context?

connecting the talk

We have discussed that every talk from God's Word, short or long, is a precious opportunity to honour Jesus and connect people to him. Before we dive in to the how-to of talk preparation let's focus on the who-to. It's possible to communicate very clearly without having communicated Christ very clearly. There's a number of connections we'll think about here. But by far the most important connection is this: that your talk connects to Jesus.



1. connect to CHRIST... the gospel centre

We have seen from 1 Corinthians that the Apostle Paul was determined to always proclaim Christ crucified—whatever the topic, whatever the situation. That's the first and most crucial connection you need to think about in your talk: does it connect to Jesus? Does it, most especially, connect to Jesus' death on the cross? Whatever the topic I've been given or chosen, whatever the passage I've been given or chosen: does my talk connect to "Christ crucified". Have a look at Luke 24:44-47. Jesus is giving a walk-along Bible Study on the whole Old Testament (Law, Prophets & Psalms, vs44) and says that it's all—all of it—about his death and resurrection, and the need for people to turn back to God for forgiveness through him. Paul did it. Jesus did it. Make sure you do it. Connect to Jesus.

2. connecting the TALK itself ... the big idea

The next aspect of connection you need to think through is how the talk connects to itself—how it flows, how it "hangs together". Listening is hard work. The fact is, no matter how short your talk is, people won't remember much of the detail of what you have said! And if your material isn't well organised, they might not remember *anything* you said! This is where communicators recommend a unifying BIG IDEA for any communication. "Big idea" really just means that you've actually got something to say. And that you say it clearly. This means making tough choices about what to leave out. Sometimes less is more! If you try to say too many things, people hear nothing. Being profound doesn't mean being complicated! A talk may cover a few different points but unless they're connected by a unifying theme they'll be lost. With a short talk, you'll need that focus all the more.

3. connecting to LIVES ... application

You've locked in the need to connect to Christ—being faithful. You've locked in the need to connect the talk itself—being clear. You also need to think about connecting to the lives of the people in front of you. Who are they? What are their lives like? What's "on their minds"? Whether consciously or not, many people have a question running through their minds as they listen to you speak. It's the question, "so what?... what difference does what you're saying make to my life?" This step is crucial. The talk needs to be Christ-centred and clear, but it also must be *applied* to the listener. It needs to answer the "so what?". Of course, we don't want to pander to this question completely. After all, Christ is at the centre of all things, not us. But we do need to show how Christ being at the centre of all things has real implications for everyone. It has implications for all the questions we ask and issues we feel. The gospel is always relevant and life-changing. It's your job to show it! What we're talking about here is often called 'application'. Unfortunately, this is often thought of as just the last bit of the talk. Sometimes it's a token minute at the end if you're lucky! In fact, the whole talk should be spoken directly into the lives of our listeners. That means we need to not only study the Word but study people too!



4. connecting to LISTENERS...

The last aspect of connection is about connecting people's ears. It's their hearts we want God's Word to reach. But it's heard via the ears! Here's a few principles to consider:

- listening's hard work. It's easy to drift off
- SO WHAT? is the question in people's heads – give them reasons to listen
- talks don't need to be complicated. Focus on a single key idea.
- read the passage. Re-read it. Write it out by hand. Re-read it.
- if you can't summarise your talk in a single sentence, who could?
- don't start writing until you have this big idea
- the idea needs to be broken down into a clear structure
- the more you say, the LESS people will remember
- give yourself plenty of time to think through application
- repetition is very important
- people like to hear about PEOPLE not abstract ideas
- even the most brilliant people prefer SIMPLE communication
- simple communication uses simple words, short sentences and repetition
- repetition is very important
- learn to write how you speak not how you write
- never use a long word when a short word will do the job
- use down to earth language – without being offensive
- never use more words than you need
- aim for an average sentence length of 15-20 words. Or less
- repeat the first sentence of a new point two or three times
- illustrate and use stories ... to explain points and to give a break
- almost always abbreviate: can't, don't, it's, aren't, etc
- start sentences with AND and BUT. Ignore your old English teacher!
- strong conclusions are crucial – don't fizzle out.
- repetition is very important
- treat the previous point seriously – it'll revolutionise your communication.



planning the talk

With these four aspects of 'connection' in mind it's time to write the talk. But don't just dive in. Plan first. Remember the need for a big idea? It's essential that you don't start detailed writing until you're clear what it is that you want to say! Don't start writing until you have wrestled with the passage and arrived at a clearly stated (written out) big idea. This next section is about how to plan out a talk.

listen to yourself

This sounds a bit weird, but listen to yourself. When you're talking at morning tea or supper, listen to yourself. When you're talking at work or at a party, listen to yourself. Get used to how you normally sound, and try to make sure that's how you sound when you speak. With the exception of projecting your voice a bit more, your speaking voice for giving a talk should be your normal voice. Your tone should be the same, rather than preachy or sermoniac. And your language should be the same, rather than formal or contrived. Try to be as 'over the fence' as possible. To do all this, you need to become a student of how you talk ... listen to yourself!

telling stories

Most especially, listen to yourself (and others) as you tell stories. Telling stories is something that we all can do very naturally when chatting but can be difficult to do in a talk. The key is to try to keep it natural. Tell it the way you would when just sitting around the dinner table. For example, something we do quite subconsciously, but is great in story-telling, is dropping into the present tense "so he looks at me and he says...". It gives a greater sense of being there. This is also useful when speaking from narrative parts of Scripture .e.g. "so Peter stands up and says...". Story-telling is a big part of communicating so it's worth becoming a student of. Study the way people tell stories. And always be on the look out for a good one to use as an illustration!

gather illustrations

always be on the look out (newspapers, other media, personal stories, etc) for illustrative material. If there's something happening in the world that your talk connects to, that can help get the point across. The further ahead you plan your talk, the more time you'll have to gather relevant illustrations.

pray

We need to ask God to help us to be faithful and clear in handling his Word. We need also to recognise that it is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit that applies God's Word to people's hearts. Proclaiming the gospel is definitely an activity where we need not only to pray first, but pray at all times.

select a unit of text

For the sake of this exercise we'll assume you already have a unit of text to speak on. But it's often the case with short talks that you're given a 'topic' rather than a passage, or no direction at all. Whether a topic has been given to you or not, it's important to find a verse or passage that will be "home turf" for the talk. This will help you to get a clear big idea and, more importantly, to be faithful to the Bible.

let the Word speak to you

Ideally it's good to look at the passage you are speaking on well ahead of when your actual preparation needs to start. This gives you space to respond to this part of God's Word yourself before you step into calling others to do so.

read & re-read the text

This stage shouldn't be hurried. Spend plenty of time just soaking in what the passage is saying. This will include looking at it's context in the book, and chasing up any links to other parts of the Bible, etc. Try to work out the flow of the passage. Write out a summary in your own words.

big idea

At this stage you should be ready to put a big idea together. This is most easily done by identifying a subject and a complement: the subject is the broad 'topic' the passage is about, in a word or two: e.g. *God's love*. The complement is what the passage is saying about the subject. So in the above example, what is the passage saying about God's love? It's saying that God's love is *unconditional*. Subject + complement = the big idea: "God's love is unconditional".

a big question

It can be useful to put the big idea into question form: e.g. "*can anyone be beyond God's love?*". This might be useful to state early (and often) in the talk.

application

Don't wait till the end of the writing process to work out where it's going! Jot down some key application ideas first. That way they won't just be tacked on.

structure

With your big idea in front of you, and your work on the flow of the passage, work out a structure for the talk that will establish the big idea. e.g. point 1: God is loving; point 2: God's love is unconditional. Even short talks need structure

key verse

If there is one verse that most captures the big idea it's worth identifying it – and perhaps going to it first in your talk before then working through the passage. Depending on how short your talk is it might in fact only be on one verse. If that's the case, however, make sure you understand (and give) the context.

key language

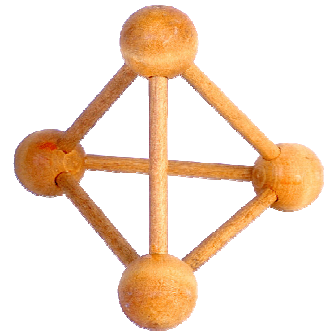
Write down some 'picture' words that will help carry the big idea (i.e. before you think about bigger illustrations, think about illustrative language & word pictures)

gospel check

How does the big idea relate to the centre of the Bible message: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ? Don't move on until you are clear about this.

a model talk

The danger of presenting a 'model talk' shape is that a model can easily become a mantra. With that qualification stated, however, it is good to have a basic model as a starting point for talk-writing. This is especially the case when you are starting out. Learn the model first, and then you'll be able to adapt it and develop it intentionally to your own style.



introduction

people make up their minds in the first minute or two whether they are going to listen to you! So the introduction needs to be interesting. This might take the form of a story, whether personal or from current events. But being interesting is only half the job. It also needs to *introduce the big idea* and the key language associated with it. Getting people's attention is great. Getting them thinking in the right ball park is even better.

key question

before moving to the text, it is useful to state the big idea in question form and somehow connect with the listener. If the introduction is where you introduce the big idea to the listener, the key question *introduces the listener* to the big idea. It needs to be personal and direct. It's about helping people anticipate that God's Word is going to speak to them today. This may also be a good point to go to the key verse.

1st point

Within each of your subpoints a few steps are normally involved:

STATE the point – say in clear terms what this point is

SHOW where in the text this point has come from (verse reference, etc)

EXPLAIN the point – expand on the point in plain language

ILLUSTRATE the point – some sort of story, etc to help your explanation

APPLY the point – this may only be brief at this stage but should happen

TRANSITION to next point – “we have seen that... next we see that” (these are critical as ‘get back on board’ points for people who may be struggling)

2nd, 3rd, etc points

...steps as above. If the talk is only 5-10 minutes it may be a single point talk.

biblical theology

depending on where you are in the Bible, you may need an intervening step before drawing conclusions and making application. In Old Testament passages, for example, you need to be careful. You need to bring the ideas/themes *through* the death and resurrection of Christ and the pouring out of the Spirit before applying to us. Otherwise you'll misapply it. Ask yourself: “what difference does Jesus make?”

conclusions & application

- what does the passage tell us about God?
- what does it tell us about us?
- what change in thinking/acting might be needed... David Cook suggests 3 categories of application:

NECESSARY – how the text applies to all people at all times...

e.g. “God's Word is the absolute authority in what is true”

POSSIBLE – some helpful suggestions on how to practically apply the truth...

“why not start each day with reading God's Word for 15 minutes?”

IMPOSSIBLE – what you cannot do or think if you are responding to this passage ... “you cannot walk away from this passage thinking tradition matters as much as the Bible...”

the critique

there is nothing radical in the idea that feedback is important. But here's something more radical: get feedback from others *before* you give the talk rather than after!

Getting feedback after a talk has the obvious problem that it's, well, too late! The fact is, people will tend to be a bit too 'soft' with you fearing that you'll feel that you did a bad job. Or you might be a bit defensive, fearing that you have done a bad job.

Contrast that to the prospect of a 'critique' - a feedback session *before* you give the talk. Sure it's still a bit confronting. But it's an opportunity to hear feedback with your defences down. Enjoy the chance to get some help improving the talk before you give it.

A few days ahead, get a couple of other leaders from your ministry together, including at least one person more experienced in giving talks.

- pray together
- distribute feedback sheets
- speak your final draft to them
- use the feedback sheet to talk through changes you might make
- while it's good to discuss a range of issues, try to come away with just one or two key improvements
- pray together again, responding to God's Word (critiques are great but we never want to become 'experts' over God's Word but always sit under it.

Apart from *this* talk being improved, you'll learn and develop greatly for *next* time. You will learn a great deal through having to make changes as you respond to thoughtful feedback.

APPENDIX L. CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLDS



*christian households

the MINISTRY PAPERS

from chaos to community...

It's pretty safe to say the people you live with have a fairly big influence on the way you live your life.

Like a lot of us, when I became a Christian I was living with people who weren't Christians. They certainly had a big influence on the way I lived my life. From keg parties to spiteful conversation, bed sharing to food stealing, the influence was exactly the opposite to what I needed at this crucial stage of my life. It was hard enough to turn to God already without practically living in the palm of Satan's hand.

A couple of my new friends from church and I decided we should move in together, into our own share house. It seemed like an eternity before it came, but finally I moved out and moved in. It was great. Not perfect, but great.

I'd like to think that all Christian households were like this, but I know they're not. We read the Bible together a lot, we prayed together a lot, we ate together a lot and we just hung out. It was like I'd gone from chaos to community. Somehow I found myself in a situation where I was being reminded nearly every day of the great relationship God had invited me into through Christ's death on the cross.

I'd like to think that this situation wasn't a one off or even that it's one we can all emulate. As a matter of fact, it's what the Bible tells us we should be like as Christians. Through devotion to the word of God, prayer, hospitality and fellowship we will build households that bring praise to our great and glorious God.

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

Our church has two main 'arms': small groups & ministry teams. This 'Christian households' paper has application in each arm, depending on your context. It was originally written for uni student share houses—& can be used by a uni accommodation ministry leader to introduce you to that ministry. It can also be used by a small group leader for broader application to what it means to be Christlike in your household, whatever that situation might be.



investigate

"You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" Acts 1:8

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Everyday they continued to meet together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47

1. What did the believers devote themselves to?

2. What did the believers have in common?

3. How often did they meet together? What was it like?

4. How did the Lord act through their community?

5. What are some of the things your household has in common with the community described in this passage?

6. What are some things you could do to be more like this community?



think & apply



pray

pray about things arising from the study:



the apostles' teaching

"they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching..." Acts 2:42

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you have learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:14-17



investigate

1. When did Timothy learn the Scriptures?

2. Who taught him the Scriptures? (see also 2 Timothy 1:5)

3. Who is the real author (of the Scriptures)?



think & apply

4. Why is it so important to read the Bible together as a household?

5. How can you make the Bible more a part of house life?

THE word around the house...

It's so important to kick on with studying the Bible together as a household. Get together and pick a book of the Bible and start reading through it together. Read a chapter at a time and ask each other questions like:

- what do you think the thrust (Big Idea) of that chapter was?
- what's the basic flow of the passage. Investigate it and do a bit of think & apply.
- what did you find encouraging/challenging about that passage?
- how can what we've read help us to grow as a Christian household?

Another great way of keeping God's word a big part of your home environment is by physically making God's word a big part of your home...

- make sure at least everybody in the house has a Bible (preferably the NIV) and that there are a few spares for guests. Leave them laying around the house.
- stick verses the house have been looking at together on the fridge or in the loo or on the bathroom mirror, they're good reminders.



pray

pray about things arising from the study:

✦

✦

✦

it's a bit like the flu...

It's not just sickness. When someone in your house gets into any habit it can also be quite contagious.

Ian came back all pumped up from a Christian convention as keen as anything to read through the book of Romans, "I'll do it every morning" he resolved. I shoveled some Weetbix into my mouth thinking 'yeah right'.

"I'll read it as well and we can talk about it" Simon piped up.

Time would tell how they went.

Sure enough each morning out on the front steps below my window Simon and Ian would sit with their coffee in one hand and the Bible in the other ploughing through the book of Romans...all the way to the end, discussing each chapter with each other as they went.

Apart from the fact that it woke me up every day from my slumber, it also woke me up to how important it is to read God's word daily as I noticed the great commitment the boys had to it in their life. Before too long I'd decided I needed to jump on this daily bible reading band wagon. It really helped keep me accountable. I knew other people were watching out for my relationship with God.

It's definitely one of the better things I've picked up from my housemates.



BIBLE briefs

The 'Bible Brief' section in the Briefing contains 20 short Bible readings. With

questions, brief background notes and ideas for prayer, the goal is to help Christians to spend 15-20 minutes each day (or most days!) reflecting on God's word and being stimulated to pray.



fellowship

“they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship,...” Acts 2:42

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:23–25

brothers...

‘Fellowship’ is one of those funny words that has different meanings in different contexts. In the case of Peter, Paul, Dan and Dave it meant hanging out together.

Living with people can be quite intense, and the guys knew that. They thought in order for things to work they just had to catch up with each other on a regular basis.

In their case it meant making sure one night a week was set aside to communicate with each other. They’d share a meal, and sit around the open fire, talk, read the Bible together, pray and maybe have a sleep out in the lounge room in front of the fire. Quite a bonding experience really.

One thing is certain though, the guys really gave the time priority.

Most of them were quite busy. And if they didn’t give the time together priority it would never have happened. They would have stopped meeting together ‘as some are in the habit of doing’.

Let us not do that as members of Christian households. Let’s make the effort to spend time together, communicating with each other—encouraging one another and all the more as we see the day of our Lord approaching.



investigate

1. What is the hope we profess?

2. What are we to consider?

3. Why is it good to meet together? Why is it bad not to?



think & apply

4. How does meeting with your household help you to hold unswervingly to the hope you profess?

5. What are some things you can do as a house to make your time together more ‘encouraging’?

Why not take the time now to plan some intentional time together to encourage one another...

reading on

There are some really great resources at the bottom of these pages. Why not buy three or four as a house and share them around with each other. The same thing could be done with good evangelical Bible studies and other resources.



fellowship

‘Short steps for long gains’ is a series of discussion type Bible studies. It’s a great little book to have sitting around the lounge, with each of the 26 pages having a study on a different Bible verse related to a topic, starting with A for Assurance and going all the way to Z for zeal.



pray

pray about things arising from the study:

✦

✦

✦

the breaking of bread

"they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread..." Acts 2:42

"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen" 1 Pet er4:7-11



investigate

1. Above all, what should we do to each other?

2. How does love cover over sins?

3. What do things like 'hospitality' and 'serve others' have to do with God's grace to us?

4. How should we serve? Why?

5. How can your house be better at loving 'each other deeply'?

6. In all things is God 'praised through Jesus Christ' in your house? How can you grow in this?



think & apply

the breaking of bread...

Eating is something that comes easily to us so it should be a fairly easy thing to do to serve God. Offering hospitality to someone, sacrificing your own time and money in order to offer someone food and comfort, is a great way of helping someone to feel loved. Here are a few tips to get that happening:

- set aside a night once a week or once a fortnight to have people over.
- don't just invite your best friends over all the time. Think of people you can have over who will benefit most from your hospitality – people who aren't necessarily already in relationships with the rest of the household. Pray about it beforehand.
- invite your non-Christian friends over. It can be a really great way of introducing them to the church family.
- when you say 'grace' before a meal, take the opportunity to incorporate the gospel and also pray for conversation that's full of grace and seasoned with salt, that is conversation that's godly (keep it short though!!!).
- don't be afraid to get the Bible out if and read it with your guests if you think it would be appropriate.



pray

pray about things arising from the study:



now that *is* 'bright' street...

Rachael, Christie & Alice share a house in Bright street. They don't have a whole lot of money but they do have a whole lot of love. This is one of their stories of godly hospitality...

"At the start of the year we had someone new to town over for tea. It was really great. We ate together and talked together and got to know each other. Then we all chipped in and washed up together. I think she had a good time and really appreciated it because she was living by herself at the time.

Now we're good friends and we hang out together and she's really enjoying being part of our church family.

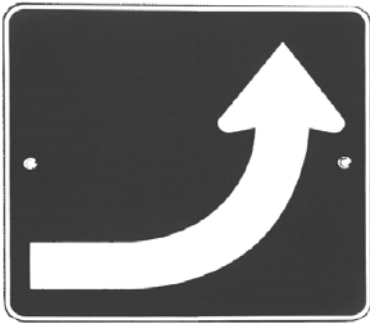
We do have people over from time to time and we try to budget for it. We don't have much money because we're mostly Uni students, but it's important to get to know people, even if it costs something. It's really encouraging for them and it's really encouraging for us."



guidance and the voice of God

How do I know what God wants me to do? How can I make decisions that are in line with God's will? If God still speaks will I

recognise his voice? These are important questions and many Christians grapple with them. "Guidance and the voice of God" charts a way through these often confusing issues, and shows how for those who have ears to hear, God is still working through his Son.



prayer

"they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" Acts 2:42

"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly as I should" Ephesians 6:17-20

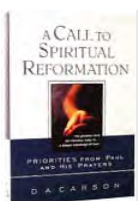
It got weird...

Praying together is a very emotional thing. It's deep and personal because it should be the truth spoken to God. You could even say that praying together is a beautiful and intimate thing. That's why it's so important to do it together as a household if you want to grow into the community that we read about in Acts chapter 2.

But here's a tip for the punters; because it's such an intimate thing we need to be wise who we do it with. When I first became a Christian I enjoyed reading the Bible and praying with whoever I could, male or female. I found myself praying with other women alone quite often and to tell the truth it got weird. Prayer is a very intimate thing and I found myself in intimate situations with more than one woman more than once. It got weird. One sort of intimacy can get confused with another. This is the sort of thing that I wanted to reserve for my wife.

Thankfully one of the guys I lived with spoke to me about it and all of a sudden it became clear how intimate prayer was, especially between guys and girls. I'm not saying that I now prohibit any such thing in any case, but I do think it's important to be wise with something as personal and powerful as prayer.

If you're really keen to pray with others why not make the most of your housemates time and pray together with them!



prayer

'A Call to Spiritual Reformation' is a great book by Don Carson that teaches us to find strength and direction in the prayers of Paul. It

spells out the lessons of Paul's "school of prayer" in expository studies for individuals and groups. It will really challenge you to think about what your priorities in prayer are and should be.



investigate

1. What is the sword of the Spirit?

2. What might it mean then, to 'pray in the Spirit'? When should we pray this way?

3. What are we to 'keep on praying' for?

4. What does Paul ask the Ephesians to pray for him?

5. What does it mean for your house to 'pray in the Spirit'?

6. How do your priorities in prayer compare to Paul's?



think &
apply

praying together...

Not everybody feels comfortable praying together or praying aloud. It's important to deal with this together as a household and encourage one another to pray about all kinds of things on all occasions. Maybe starting off praying one on one, or writing your prayers out will help. With prayer, we're all still learning. Here are a few suggestions to help with house prayer life:

- pray before you read the Bible together, asking God to help you understand his word
- pray after you read the Bible together, about the things you have talked about
- if anything arises, big or small, good or bad, that somehow affects any member of the household, be bold enough to sit down with each other and pray about it.
- share the opportunity of saying 'grace' around and try and make it Christ focused
- keep a prayer list on the fridge, and keep it current



pray

pray about things arising from the study:

✱

✱

✱

those **being saved**

"...And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:47

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." 1 Corinthians 10:31–11:1



investigate

1. What should we do for the glory of God?

2. What does it mean to cause people to stumble?

3. Why is Paul trying to please everybody in every way?

4. Whose example is Paul following?



think & apply

5. How have the studies you've looked at so far helped your house to do 'all for the glory of God'?

6. What are some things about your house that may be causing others to stumble? How can this be changed?

7. How can the salvation of others be at the heart of your household?

live it!

A major part of becoming a Christian for me was experiencing the true love and community of Christian people like Pete & Suzie. Even though my life was riddled with sin, these people, like the God they follow, were ready to accept me. It was an incredibly warm and welcoming thing.

Suddenly the contrast between the life I had known and the life my Christian friends were living was absolutely amazing. The way they were truly hospitable and the way they truly shared their lives for the sake of my salvation was a great model of people following the example of Christ.

It wasn't just the way they shared their lives with others that presented me with a Godly witness. It was the way they shared their lives with each other. They really seemed to give themselves up for each other in a way I hadn't experienced before. Somehow I knew that their salvation was at the heart of the way they were living, and for that I'm truly thankful.

Why not think of a couple of your own friends to witness to as a house and pray about it together?

those being saved...

Above all things it's important to recognise that living with other Christians presents a great opportunity to minister to the unsaved. By loving one another and living lives to the praise of God we can be effective witnesses. It is important to recognise this and be intentional with the things that we do:

- be motivated in all that you do by the idea that your life could point people to the cross of Christ and bring glory to God.
- talk to each other about your evangelism 'contacts' and pray about it together. Use all the resources God has given you in your household to make Christ known.
- follow each other up about how you're going with your non-Christian friends.



pray

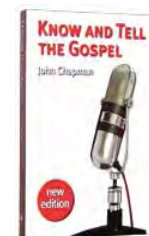
pray about things arising from the study:

✱

✱

✱

✱



evangelism

To be effective in sharing the gospel you need a good grip on it yourself. Apart from being an easy read, John Chapman's 'Know and Tell the Gospel'

is a great book to read through as a household to help you all to be sharpened in the area of evangelism. It's one thing to pray about people that you want to be saved. It's another to try and equip yourselves with the skills to do it. This is a great book for doing exactly that.



putting it **all together**

"They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Everyday they continued to meet together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47

Hopefully doing these studies together has prompted plenty of ideas about the shape of your life together as a household. Having done the hard work, it's probably worth looking back through the studies and putting together the various ideas and plans that you've been challenged about. Think of this page as a worksheet... moving from studies to a living plan for your household...



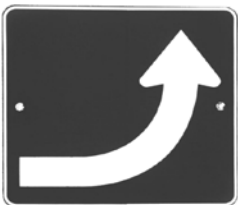
word



fellowship



breaking bread



prayer



evangelism

other ideas...



"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Everyday they continued to meet together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47