

WAY OF DISCIPLESHIP BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

SESSION 5: CHOOSING HOPE AND HONESTY IN DIFFICULTY PART ONE FACILITATOR'S NOTES

CHECKLIST

- Have I got a good sense of the signposted resources? Which would be good to highlight with my group?
- Have I got the technology set up, and does it work(!)?
- Is there a visual focus I want to offer for worship this or next week – image, candle, video?
- Who is doing tea/coffee?
- Are there any notices I need to share?
- Is there anyone in my group who has pastoral needs we should be aware of at the moment?

WITH YOUR CO-FACILITATOR

- Are we using our different gifts well tonight?
- If we are running out of time, what shall we miss out or postpone?
- Who is doing what in the session? Clarity about who is leading which section really helps!
- Are we confident using DBS?
- Who among the participants can we encourage to use their gifts in leading, praying, or facilitating tonight or next week? How much preparation will they need?
- What and who do we particularly want to pray for at the moment?
- How are we offering a good variety in our worship and prayer styles?

REVIEW THE OUTCOMES FOR THIS SESSION

- To understand the reasons Christians still struggle in life.
- To understand the significance of, and evidence for, Jesus' resurrection.
- To understand the nature of Christian hope beyond death.
- To approach my own mortality in the light of hope in my lived experience.

FOR THIS SESSION YOU WILL NEED

- TV / Laptop / Wifi
- Ppt for session 5
- Any prayer materials or visual focus. DBS guide.
- There is one short video in this session – check it is working.



6.30 PM PREPARING MYSELF

You might like to reflect on 2 Corinthians 4: 16-18, asking God to give you confidence in His risen power in your session: 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Take a moment to pray for each person in your group. Commit yourself to the Lord this evening. You might like to use these words:

Prayer from "Hearts on fire- praying with Jesuits".

Jesus Christ, may your death be my life
and in your dying may I learn how to live.

May your struggles be my rest,
your human weakness be my courage,
your embarrassment my honour,
your passion my delight,
your sadness my joy,

in your humiliation may I be exalted.

In a word, may I find all my blessings in your trials.

Amen.

7 PM OPENING WORSHIP

Feel free to use the suggested activity, which aims to draw on different styles, or approaches, or to do something which reflects your own context or tradition if that is more helpful. (Available on separate Worship Aims Bible passage powerpoint)

Use the song: Listen to the words (Peace be with you) (4:35) from Engage Worship.

<https://youtu.be/UhMI4UVjV4E> Or you can read out the words from the powerpoint.

Listen to the words of the risen Christ: peace be with you.

Come and see his hands and the wound in his side: peace be with you.

With the eyes of faith are you ready to see? Peace be with you.

Come with all your doubts for it's time to believe: peace be with you, peace be with you.

Let the breath of God now fill me; wholeness, fullness, life within me.

Full forgiveness given freely, I receive as Jesus sends me.

7.10 PM INTRODUCTION - AIMS FOR THE EVENING

(You may want to miss this out if your group is less formal, or you are using the material one to one). (Available on separate Worship Aims Bible passage powerpoint)

- To understand the reasons Christians still struggle in life.
- To understand the significance of, and evidence for, Jesus' resurrection.
- To understand the nature of Christian hope beyond death.
- To approach my own mortality in the light of hope in my lived experience.

It might be helpful to flag up that our focus will partly be death, grief and hope in case there is anyone in your group who is recently bereaved or may struggle to participate.



7.15 PM FEEDBACK AND OPENING QUESTION

In their pairs from the end of the last session, ask people to feedback to each other how their experience of their response action(s) from last week has been - the emphasis is on mutual encouragement in accountability, not guilt!

Then in pairs ask people to discuss these questions for 5 minutes: What is difficult about being a disciple? In what ways might discipleship mean life can be more challenging?

7.25 PM CORE TEACHING CONTENT

The core content is designed to be as user-friendly, and as flexible/context-friendly, as possible. You can use the script and powerpoint provided, using your own material or approaches to reflect your context and teaching style. Because truth in the Scripture is often perceived through metaphor and story, the content will include at least one story example (although other "stories" are found in the Modelling section), and at least one visual example.

*The whole of the content is produced in a booklet for each session – if you are not covering all the material, you may want to point participants to reading the booklet between sessions. **It is a good idea to have a break halfway through.***

Should life be easy for a disciple who is becoming like Christ?
What does God say will ultimately happen to His whole creation?
What happens after to me death?
How might I personally experience life after death?
Why can I be confident in the resurrection?
How do disciples see death?

Following the content, you may like to give people a few minutes to think of any questions or reflections on the material, then facilitate a discussion based on any points raised for 5-10 minutes. They will have reflection time in smaller groups after the video, but this gives an opportunity for initial whole-group discussion. As facilitator you are not expected to have all the answers, but can help the group explore together.

8.10 PM MODELLING/REFLECTION

Video and own experience. Show the video and, if time share from your own experience, remembering that real struggles can be as helpful as victories!
Discuss in pairs, and then together: What difference does the big picture of God's future restoration make on a Monday morning? How does a disciple get to approach their own death? What questions do you have?
Model a response as facilitator(s) by offering your reflection first.



8.30 PM DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

John 11: 17-44. (Available on separate Worship Aims Bible passage powerpoint)
See the instruction sheet for how to do DBS. After you have read the passage and retold, use whatever method will enable most people to participate – talking in pairs, splitting questions up between different pairs, splitting into smaller groups with group members asking the five questions (this will disciple people through putting leading DBS into practice).

N.B. Encourage giving enough focus on the personal response questions in 3 and 4. As your group grows in trust, hopefully people will become more confident in sharing their responses together – as facilitator(s) taking the lead in this models your own discipleship and helps create openness in others.

8.50 PM PERSONAL RESPONSE AND ACTION FOR COMING WEEK.

Having learnt content, seen it modelled, reflected and heard each other, and listened to God in Scripture, each disciple will end with the questions, “What is God saying to me and what is my response?” Any actions they take will be self-generated. But the following week they will be encouraged at the beginning to report back to one other person.

Ask people to reflect on this in pairs – they will never have to report back to the whole group. If they wish to help one another by writing down any actions and praying for each other then encourage them to do so. There is no group feedback, but as facilitator you can share what you feel able in order to model gentle accountability and trust.

9 PM SIGNPOSTING

Look at the suggested follow on materials described in terms of quality and length. You may like to highlight one or two, depending on the make up of your group.

Ask people to bring Bibles with them if they have them to following sessions.

See handout “Extra Reading or Listening Suggestions” as follow up material for this week, and point people towards the Session booklets for this session and next week - you might agree on sections they read beforehand in order to free up more discussion time in the following session.

9.05 PM CLOSING PRAYER

Use the suggested prayer or pray in whatever way is helpful. (Available on separate Worship Aims Bible passage powerpoint) Use the verse and opening prayer from the "Preparing Myself" section.

You may like to give time for open prayer.



REVIEW AFTER GROUP HAS LEFT

What went well?

Where did I sense God's presence?

What can I do better?

Was anyone absent that I need to follow up on?

Looking ahead to next week, what might I (or the co-facilitator) share from our lived experience in the "Modelling" section?

