

Weekend message Small group study

- complementing the sermon given at St. Paul on **5/9/15 – 5/10/15**
- a meeting agenda organized per St. Paul core values
- estimated for a 90-minute meeting

Equipping “the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” – Eph. 4:12

Below is a tool to help delegate the leading/facilitating of meeting components between different small group members.

	Prayer (p.4)	Outreach (p.3)	Word of God (p.2)	Equipping (p. 4)	Worship - Our Redemption Response - (p.2)
Study component leader					

Prayer leader – Leads group prayer time

Outreach leader – Leads the charge of outreach (serving, inviting, filling the empty chair, etc.)

Word of God leader – Leads the Bible study time, encourages application of God’s Word to life

Equipping Leader – Coordinates and reminds who will lead the different meeting components.

Worship (Our Redemption Response) Leader – Leads worship time during meeting.

Introduction

Luke 2:21-40 ESV - ²¹ *And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.*

²² *And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord* ²³ *(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”)* ²⁴ *and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”* ²⁵ *Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. ²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸ he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,*

²⁹ *“Lord, now you are letting your servant[a] depart in peace, according to your word;*

³⁰ *for my eyes have seen your salvation*

³¹ *that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,*

³² *a light for revelation to the Gentiles,*

and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³ *And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in*

Israel, and for a sign that is opposed³⁵ (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

³⁶ And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin,³⁷ and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.³⁸ And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Worship – Our Redemption Response

5 minutes

All: Lord, we cannot comprehend that You, the Creator of the Universe, took on flesh and were born of a peasant girl. You, the One who spoke galaxies into existence, became a speechless newborn baby. You, the One who gave the stars their light, veiled Your own glory and slipped unnoticed into the human race. You, the One who clothed all of nature in its boundless beauty and order, came to us wrapped in rags and lying in a feeding trough. The miracle of Your incarnation is all too unexpected, too mysterious, too holy for us to understand. We can only follow the shepherds to the manger and bow in astonishment and thanksgiving, glorifying and praising You for all that I have heard and seen. Amen.

adapted from *The NIV Worship Bible*, p.1374.

Word of God

45 minutes

1. How did you SEE God at work in your life this week?
2. What has God been teaching you in HIS WORD?
3. **Review Luke 2:21-40** (found in the introduction). A Bowling Green University study found that...”The key to time investment for parents is a *balance* of quantity and quality”. How do you find this to be true?
4. The Gospel story in Luke 2 teaches us about love and reciprocity (*reciprocity* defined as “the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit”). The Old Testament practice of sacrificing two doves or pigeons to God is found in Leviticus 12:8a ESV): “If she cannot afford a lamb, she is to bring two doves or two young pigeons...” So it is obvious that the mother of the Son of God could not afford (or did not own) a lamb to sacrifice.

Now consider this statement: Parent's don't give in order to be appreciated, but because they love.

Taking all of this into account, what does God want us to know about love and reciprocity?

5. What does the story of Mary and Jesus teach us about motivation and manipulation?
6. What does the Gospel story teach us about children and their listening skills?
7. What is the lesson from Mary's life about the tension between growing demands and limited resources?

Outreach

15 minutes

"The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price." (Revelation 22:17 ESV)



Here in Revelation we have a "Come-to-Jesus Moment." Most often this phrase is used in the context of a person needing to get their act together and finally making that commitment or recommitment to something important.

This "Come-to-Jesus Moment" is something different. Anyone can come to Jesus.

Anyone who is thirsty.
Anyone who doesn't have his/her act together.
Anyone with addictions.
Anyone with hurts.
Anyone with hang-ups.
Anyone with a regretful past.
ANYONE!

May anyone and everyone "take the free gift of the water of life" that is found in Jesus alone!

Who are you praying for that they'd come to Jesus?

adapted from <http://craigmattes.blogspot.com/>

Prayer

20 minutes

Share a prayer request based on what was discussed during this meeting's *Word of God* and/or *Outreach* time. What is that next step in your faith life God is calling you to make? What convicted you from God's Word and/or our discussion of His Word? Please also share a way in which the group may support/encourage you regarding what you've shared. Of course other important matters can be prayed about as well. After all have shared, pray for the person on your left (whether aloud or silently). Pray together in popcorn style (as opposed to going in order around a circle.)

Equipping *for coordinating next week's meeting...*

5 minutes

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