

## Weekend message Small group study

- complementing the sermon given at St. Paul on **1/3/15 – 1/4/15**
- 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.3)	Outreach (p.2)	Word of God (p.2)	Equipping (p. 3)	Worship - Our Redemption Response - (p.1)
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

<sup>3-6</sup> How blessed is God! And what a blessing he is! He’s the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, and takes us to the high places of blessing in him. Long before he laid down earth’s foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love. Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of his lavish gift-giving by the hand of his beloved Son.

<sup>7-10</sup> Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we’re a free people—free of penalties and punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds. And not just barely free, either. Abundantly free! He thought of everything, provided for everything we could possibly need, letting us in on the plans he took such delight in making. He set it all out before us in Christ, a long-range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in him, everything in deepest heaven, everything on planet earth.

<sup>11-12</sup> It’s in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.

<sup>13-14</sup> It’s in Christ that you, once you heard the truth and believed it (this Message of your salvation), found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. This signet from God is the first installment on what’s coming, a reminder that we’ll get everything God has planned for us, a praising and glorious life. (Ephesians 1:3-14 MSG)

## Worship – Our Redemption Response

5 minutes

**All:** Lord God, you have sought us in Your love, You have pursued us with Your grace, You have captured us by Your mercy in Jesus. Your intention from the dawn of creation was to be in relationship with us. Why would You choose us? We hide. You seek. We hold back. You pour Yourself out on our behalf. We are weak, broken and unresponsive. Yet You are relentless in Your pursuit of us. You are determined to make us holy and blameless in Your sight. We will never fully comprehend the depth of Your love or the riches of Your grace in Christ Jesus. All praise be to You, our loving Lord! Amen.

excerpt from Maranatha's *The NIV Worship Bible*, © 2000, p. 1570.

## Word of God

45 minutes

1. How did you see God at work in your life last year? What was that *one* particular thing that stuck out from the rest? What are you most looking forward to in this coming year?
2. **Read Ephesians 1:9-10 (DNL T)** - "having made-known to us the mystery of His will according to His good-pleasure, which He purposed in Himself for a stewardship of the fullness of times, that He might sum-up all things in Christ— the things at the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him..."

Have you ever had a moment in life when things didn't seem to "sum-up"/"add up"?

3. Jesus' understanding of His mission, His kingdom, didn't "add up" in the minds of His disciples. What were some of the confusing issues for them?
4. How do these add up in your mind now that you have the advantage of looking back through the power of the Holy Spirit?
5. What things do not seem to add up in your life? How can you make sense of these "confusing" realities?

## Outreach

15 minutes

What kind of conversations are you having lately with those who do *not-yet-know* Jesus?

**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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