

NOTES FOR SMALL GROUP LEADERS | W/C 8 OCTOBER BLESS #1 | Jesus' Mission, My Mission

Planning your evening

These notes have been written before the Sunday talk to which they relate (from 7 October) so there may be things that you have noted from the Sunday that you would like to discuss with your group – that is, of course, fine! Everything in these notes is a suggestion – so feel free to run your session in the way you think will work best for your group. For instance, you can decide whether or not the icebreaker and worship theme will work with your group, and you can pick and choose the discussion questions you think will be most helpful (there are some 'leaders' notes' along the way which are there to give a steer as to the emphasis or aim of some of the questions). If you'd like to add any elements, like breaking bread, that's of course fine too.

Video Content

This is the first evening of having the option of some video content to play to help stimulate discussion in your group. The best time to use this content is indicated in the notes. The video will be available to stream/download on the website or it can be provided on DVD. Please could you let us know by email (sgc@kchw.co.uk) how you would like to access the video content so we know how many DVDs to produce?

Sharing stories

People's stories are powerful (and a key part of BLESS) so please do keep having the story slot where one or two in the group have the opportunity to share their story that they have prepared using the guidelines emailed previously.

We would also really appreciate hearing any stories that emerge from your group, as well as feedback on the materials we're providing throughout the series. Please share stories and feedback with us, either through your Cluster Leader or by emailing sgc@kchw.co.uk

Through the 'King's News' section at the end, we will aim to keep you informed of things that are coming up so you can remind your people about them.

We're continuing to pray for you and trust you will have a good and fruitful time together!

Starting Out

ICEBREAKER SUGGESTION

What is the best holiday you've ever been on? What was so good about it?

WORSHIP SUGGESTION

Read Psalm 23 together and reflect, pray and praise God that He is the Good Shepherd who is with us in all seasons of life.

PERSONAL STORIES

Someone in the group (asked in advance) shares their 3-minute story. Following this, ask for a volunteer(s) for next week.

Discussion & Reflection – part 1

OPENING QUESTIONS

1. How 'purposeful' does your life feel right now? What sorts of things give your life more purpose?
2. How would you *define* the purpose of your life (your 'mission statement', if you like)? How does that show in your life?
If you did the icebreaker, ask: Do you talk about your purpose with the same passion and enthusiasm as you do your favourite holiday?
3. How connected do you feel to the church and to its mission (to see ordinary people changed by Jesus to change the world)?

Leaders' notes: These questions are to get people thinking honestly about what 'gets them out of bed in the morning'. If the answer is 'Jesus', press into the 'How does that show in your life' question. Where there is a sense of disconnection with the church and the mission of the church, explore why that is and what they could do to feel more connected.

IN THE BIBLE

1. Read (or ask someone in the group to read) John 4:3-42. As you read, ask people to think about the following questions, and then discuss:
 - o What was it in Jesus that the Samaritan woman responded to?
 - o How does Jesus 'open the door' to speak into her life?
(eg. Jesus is kind but direct, he surprised her and puts value on her by associating with her (this woman is a bit of an outcast), he offers life and hope to her, he uses a word of knowledge, he allows her to serve him – what is the effect of that?..)
2. Read v34 again. How does Jesus describe his 'food' / his mission? What do you think He means by this?
Remind the group of the 3 Rs from Sunday:
 - *Reach ('ordinary people' who are far from God)*
 - *Restore ('changed by Jesus')*
 - *Reproduce ('to change the world' – to make disciple-making disciples)*
3. The Samaritan woman's purpose changes after she meets Jesus. She leaves her water jar, and goes and tells anyone she can find about Him. We are not just saved *FROM* something, but we are also saved *FOR* something. What do you think you have been saved *FOR*? How closely is your purpose/mission in life aligned with Jesus' purpose/mission?

Video Content

Show Rich & Rob's story and the group discussion between John Harbour, Richard Lodge and Jen Swallow to turn the focus of discussion to BLESS.

Discussion & Reflection – part 2

1. Who were the 'blessers' in your journey to faith? What were they like? What did they do?
2. How have you been blessed by God?
3. God blesses Abraham in Genesis 12 in order for him to be a blessing to the world. We also have been blessed to be a blessing. In what ways are you already blessing people? How can we be more intentional?

Leaders' notes: Having spent the last couple of weeks focussing on evangelism in general (and probably establishing that it's not something people generally find easy...), the aim here is to now focus on BLESS as something which will help us pursue the mission Jesus has given us. It's something about which everyone will hopefully think, 'I can do that'...

Find out where your group are at with BLESS. Do they understand it? What are their thoughts and feelings about it? Do they all have a pocket guide? Be positive about BLESS, encouraging a sense of expectation of how God will use it.

If people haven't yet started their BLESS list, make space for them to do it here, listening to God and asking Him to guide who they put on their list.

Encourage those in your group to start now and do at least one of the BLESS practices every day. Explain that each week from now, you'll start the small group evening by asking, 'Who have you BLESSed this week?' which will be an opportunity for people to share and celebrate stories resulting from BLESS, no matter how small or insignificant they may seem – eg:

- 'I've been praying and this person asked to go for coffee with me...' or
- 'because I've been praying, I made the effort to meet up with this person...' or
- 'I had a great conversation with someone because I was focussing on listening to them, and they really opened up...' etc.

Starting with this question each week is crucial because it acts as a reminder and provides accountability.

Prayer

- Pray to develop a passion/more of a passion for Jesus' mission and for the boldness and courage to pursue it.
- Pray for an expectation that the Holy Spirit will work in you and lead you into meaningful encounters with people.
- Pray for one another.

King's News

- Remind people about the Encounter Evening on Sunday 14th October, 7-8.30pm at the Town Centre site. Encourage people to make it a priority as we come together as one church to worship, pray and encounter God.
- For any church members who would like to be part of the Prayer Team, there is Prayer Team training during the afternoon of Sunday 14th October from 1.30-4pm. Sign up on the Small Groups page of the website.