

## NOTES FOR SMALL GROUP LEADERS | W/C 19 NOVEMBER BLESS #7 | Motivated by Love

### Planning your evening

Please continue to start the evening with the 'Who have you BLESSED this week?' question. As ever, if you as the leader have something to share, it encourages others to share. Equally, if some in your group have forgotten, this acts as a good reminder!

These notes have been written before the Sunday talk to which they relate (from 18 November) so there may be things that you have noted from the Sunday talk 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.

### Planning next week

Next week is a 'prayer experience'. Don't worry - you will be provided with detailed notes to guide your group through this experience and it will consist of different parts to keep the evening moving along, while allowing time and space for God to speak. It would be a good idea, if possible, to make the duration of your group a bit longer for that week – 2 hours would be good to allow time for explanations and a debrief and a good chunk of time for prayer.

### 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](mailto: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

### OPENING QUESTION

Who have you BLESSed this week?

### WORSHIP SUGGESTION

Read 1 John 3:1-2 and Revelation 7:9-17 and give praise together for the love of God that assures us of a glorious future.

### PERSONAL STORIES

Someone in the group (asked in advance) shares their 3-minute story. Ask for a volunteer(s) for the next time you will have the opportunity to share stories.

## Video Content

Zoe's story and group discussion between John Harbour, Richard Lodge and Jen Swallow that will focus on some of the areas for discussion below.

## Discussion & Reflection

### OPENING QUESTIONS

1. In what ways can pride be a motivation for sharing our faith with others or not sharing our faith with others?

*Leaders' notes: We can share faith in order to have a good story to tell, to make ourselves look like a 'good Christian', out of a sense of superiority... or we can avoid sharing faith out of fear of what people will think of us, loss of reputation, etc. It all comes back to the root of pride – focus on self.*

2. What do you think is the definition of success in evangelism?

### INTO THE BIBLE

Read **Luke 18:18-25** – do we learn anything from this story that helps us with the definition of success in evangelism?

*Leaders' notes: Jesus is a pretty good evangelist (!) but even he experienced people who didn't respond by coming to faith. In evangelism, we are to be motivated by love, not by people's response. Success is when you have loved people like Jesus loves them – continuing to pray for them, listen to them, eat together, serve them and share your story with them. Success is when you point people towards Jesus, when you're prepared to speak loving truth to them, and you keep loving them whether they respond or not. There will be people in your group who have been praying for friends and family for years with no response – encourage them to keep going.*

We finished the BLESS series where we started it – in **John 4:3-42**. Remind yourselves of some of the things you discussed in that first week from this passage and what was said on Sunday:

- What was it in Jesus that the Samaritan woman responded to?
- How did Jesus 'open the door' to speak into her life?
- In what ways does Jesus show his love for her?
- What obstacles did Jesus have to overcome in this encounter and how does that demonstrate that his motivation is love, not pride?

- How has Jesus loved you? What is your identity based on? How does that release you to demonstrate and talk about your faith with love?

*Leaders' notes: When we grasp that salvation is received, not achieved... that your identity in Christ is not based on being better than others, but is based on grace... when you come to the cross of Christ, there is no room for pride – so you stop worrying about reputation or what others think, and you stop needing to make yourself look good – it leaves you free to love others.*

## REVIEW

1. Has anything changed in you as a result of pursuing the BLESS missional practices? Do you feel aligned with Jesus' mission, with the mission of the church?
2. What obstacles have you faced/are you facing to pursuing BLESS? How have/will you overcome them?
3. Thinking of the people on your list, where do you see God at work in their lives or in your relationship with them since you have started doing BLESS?
4. This is the crucial question – how will you ensure that you continue to pursue these BLESS practices with those whom God has put in your life beyond the series and in the months and years to come?

*Leaders' notes: We really do see BLESS as a very significant tool in shaping our outreach and encouraging a culture of outreach in the church. Culture takes time to shape, so it is essential for BLESS to continue beyond the series. Encourage people in the group to commit to continuing with BLESS in realistic and practical ways.*

## LOOKING FORWARD

1. Next week is a prayer evening. Reassure people that it will be a great experience that they will be guided through and they will hear God speak. It would be good if you could make your evening 2 hours long for this to give enough time for explanation and debrief.
2. Hopefully you have decided on what you are doing as a group in December, whether that includes the outreach/serving challenges or not. Remind people of what you will be doing.

## Prayer

- Pray for the ongoing situations and relationships you have with the people on your BLESS list.
- Pray to be filled with God's love for you and for others – to see 'the lost' as He sees them.

## King's News

- There will be an Exploring Church Membership morning at Hazlemere on 2 December, 9.15-12.45.
- Carols at King's – a great event to invite people to.
  - Hazlemere – Sun 9 December, 6pm
  - Town Centre – Sun 16 December, 11.30am, 3.30pm, 6.30pm