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| --- | --- |
| Session | DVD |
| 1 | - |
| 2 | Les Miserables |
| 3 | Hook |
| 4 | - |
| 5 | - |
| 6 | - |
| 7 | - |
| 8 | Finding Nemo |
| 9 |  |
| 10 | Lord of the Rings – The Two Towers |
| 11 | To Kill a Mockingbird |
| 12 | - |
| 13 | - |

**Session 1 – How did we get here, and where are we going ?**

“So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord, who is spirit, makes us more like him as we are changed into his glorious image” 2 Cor 3:18

**Welcome**

Be specific

1. Describe your journey here tonight ?
2. Who had the toughest trip here ? Why ?
3. What part of everyone’s directions were similar or the same ? Explain.
4. What parallels could you draw between your travels here this evening and your individual walk with Jesus ? What is totally different between the two ?

This evening we are going to look at how far we have come with Jesus; from when we first connected with Him and where he has taken us since then.

**Worship**

Take my life and let it be.

**Word**

Read Acts 26:1-29

1. How would you describe Paul before he met Jesus ?
2. How was Paul changed by his encounter with Jesus, and how did Paul’s transformation affect others ?

Paul’s story was dramatic, but we each have a story. What is yours. If you have time later on this week you may like to answer questions 3 to 5 in more detail.

1. What was your life like before you knew Jesus ? (or, if you were raised a Christian before your faith became personal to you) What were you like ?
2. How did God finally get your attention ? How did you respond ?
3. How has your life been different because you know Jesus ? What spiritual landmarks in your life can you point to where you can confidently say, “I know Jesus was in that”?

We have a story but what else can we do to let others understand what Jesus has done for us.

Read Mat5:13-16, Mat 28:18-20, Acts 2:46-47, 2 Cor 3:12-18, Phil 2:12-15

1. How can we show our faith to others, according to these verses ?
2. What elements of faith sharing are we responsible for ? Which parts are God’s responsibility ?

Jesus has revealed himself to each one of us and wants us to share his love with others.

On a slip of paper write down a favourite bible verse. Take a few moments to reflect on why this verse has meaning to you.

Tear your slip of paper into enough pieces so that everyone has a piece. Can they guess the verse. Once the verses have been guessed answer the following questions :

1. What was the verse you shared, and how has God spoken to you through it ?
2. How was this activity similar to how we show some parts of our faith to others but not other parts ?
3. What parts of your faith do you allow to show, and what parts do you keep hidden ? What could you do to give a more complete picture of what God has done in your life ?

**Witness**

Chose 1

Know it – Read Acts 22 & 2 Peter 1:12-18. Ask Jesus to make changes in you and the people you meet.

Share it – Reflect on how Jesus has changed you then share it with someone.

Go for it – Think of people you see regularly. How can you reflect God’s love in them. Fix a lawn mover, invite them round for dinner.

Do it together – How can we share God’s love in our community ? Litter pick?

Take my life and let it be

Consecrated Lord to thee

Take my moments and my days

Let them flow in ceaseless praise

Take my hands and let them move

At the impulse of thy love

Take my feet and let them be

Swift and beautiful for thee

Take my voice and le me sing

Always only for my king

Take my lips and let them be

Filled with messages from thee

Take my silver and my gold

Not a mite would I with hold

Take my intellect and use

Every power as thou shalt chose

Take my will and make it thine

It shall be no longer mine

Take my heart it is thine own

It shall be Thy royal throne

Take my love my Lord I pour

At thy feet its treasure store

Take myself and I will be

Ever only all for Thee

**Session 2 - What did Jesus Do ?**

“If anyone is in Christ He has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun !”

2 Cor 5:17

**Welcome**

Watch ‘Les Miserables’ 0:06:05 to 0:09:20 from when Jean Valjean sneaks into the room to steel the silver to when his conversation with the bishop finishes.

1. In the face of what he had done how do you think Jean Valjean felt about the bishops response to him ?
2. How do you think the bishop’s actions affected Jean’s life from that point on ? Why ?

**Worship**

Jesus you are changing me

**Word**

Read Ephesians 4:22-24

1. In what ways do you already know you’re a new person in Jesus ? What helps you see that ?
2. In what ways is it still tough to see yourself as a new person in Jesus ? Why ?

Last week we thought about our faith stories. Hopefully we have reflected on them in more detail over the last week. In twos share your story in more detail; preferably with someone whose story you are unfamiliar with. Spend approx. 5 minutes on each story. At the end of which ask questions on parts that are not clear. If you see Gods hand in something encourage them. Once finished swap roles.

1. How did you feel to share your faith story with someone else ? Why ?
2. What’s one thing you enjoyed about your partner’s faith story ? What parts resembled your own story ?
3. What part of your partners life in Jesus would you like to see more reflected in your own like ?

Read John 15:13-16, Romans 8:14-17, 2 Cor 5:17-20, Eph 1:11-14, Eph 2: 4-7

1. What encourages you about these verses ? What intimidates you ? Which ideas do you have trouble understanding ?
2. How might really understanding and believing what Jesus has done for you challenge the way you see yourself and the way you see others ?

Take a bowl of water. One by one close your eyes, make a wish and toss in the penny.

1. Be honest; for you what’s the difference between making a wish and tossing in a penny, and talking to God in prayer ? Explain.

Read Eph 3:14-21

1. When have you caught a glimpse into ‘how wide, how long, how high, and how deep [God’s] love is ?’ How has seeing that affected your life ? Be specific ?
2. Right now what (or who) could help you better understand – and remember – the width, height, and depth of Jesus’ love for you ?

**Witness**

Chose 1 of the following

* Spend an hour this week reflecting on the passages discussed this week. Ask God to meet with you and reveal himself to you.
* Set aside a specific time each day to tell God what’s on your heart. Ask him what is on His heart. Who he wants you to reach out to. Ask Him to stretch your faith.
* If you did not do it last week find someone outside your group to share your faith story with.
* Is there something we can do as a group ?

**Session 3 – Who do you Love ?**

“So why do you keep calling me ‘Lord, Lord ! when you don’t do what I say ?”

Luke 6:46

**Welcome**

Watch DVD ‘Hook’ Ch15, 1:14:00 from where peter asks “eat what ?” to 1:16:00 when Peter sits back down.

I what ways do you feel or act like a child ?

**Word**

Read 1 Cor 13:9-12

1. Is it always a bad thing to be like a child ? Why or why not ?
2. On the other hand where are you seeing God already starting to help you grow ?

Read Phil 3:12 – 17

1. What’s one are of your life in which you could honestly encourage others to ‘pattern you lives after mine’ (v17) No false humility here – take time to be thankful for what Jesus has already done in your life.
2. How does dwelling on your past affect your ability to ‘reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize’ (v14)? Can dwelling on the past ever be a good thing ? If so how ?
3. How would you describe ‘what lies ahead’ for you right now ? What do you think God is asking you to do to prepare for it ?

Read Phil 2:5-8

**Worship**

Reflect

“You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had [who] did not think of equality with god as something to cling to.”

*In what ways do you still insist on doing things your own way instead of God’s way ?*

“You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had… [who] gave up his divine privileges”

*How have you allowed yourself to feel superior to others simply because you are a Christian ?*

“You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had … [who] took the humble position of a slave.”

*Who in particular have you refused to serve, whether by open rebellion or by quiet avoidance ? Picture that person.*

*When was the last time you claimed glory for yourself rather than giving it to God?*

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had … [who] humbled himself in obedience to God.”

*What areas of your life have you not really submitted to God ? What would it look like if you did ?*

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had … [who] died a criminals death on a cross.”

*When do you still insist on defending your reputation rather than trusting God and allowing Him to defend you ?*

Are there things that God highlighted to you are you reflected ?

Sing “Servant King”

**Witness**

Chose 1 of the following

* Spend an hour this week reflecting on the cost of following Jesus (Mat 4:18-22, 16:24-27, 21:28-32 Luke 6:46-49, 9:57-62, 10:1-24 John 14: 15, 14:24)
* Set aside a specific time each day to tell God what’s on your heart. Ask him what is on His heart. Who he wants you to reach out to. Ask Him to stretch your faith.
* If you did not do it last week find someone outside your group to share your faith story with.
* Is there something we can do as a group ?

**From heav’n you came**, helpless babe,

Entered our world, Your glory veil’d

Not to be served but to serve,

And give your life that we might live.

*This is our God the servant king*

*He calls us now to follow Him*

*To bring our lives as a daily offering*

*Of worship to the servant king.*

There in the garden of tears

My heavy load he chose to bear

His heart with sorrow was torn

Yet not my will But yours he said

Come see His hands and His feet

The scars that speak of sacrifice

Hands that flung stars into space

To cruel nails surrendered

So let us learn how to serve

And in our lives enthrone him

Each others needs to prefer

For it is Christ we’re serving.

**Session 4 – Relationships Take Time**

“Then Jesus said, ‘Let’s go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile’”

Mark 6:31

“True christian experience must always include a genuine encounter with God. Without this, religion is but a shadow, a reflection of reality, a cheap copy of an original … The spiritual giants of old were men who at some time became acutely conscious of the real presence of God.” A.W.Tozer

**Welcome**

Think about a close friend either now or when you were growing up. What was it about that person that made them your best friend ?

What are some of the things you currently do to develop stronger friendships with others ?

**Word**

Read John 15:13-15

What are the things you do, or can do, to develop a relationship with Jesus ? How are those things like or unlike how you approach your earthly friendships ?

Read Mark 6:30-32

According to the passage, why did the disciples need to get away with Jesus ? When have you thought of your own times with Jesus that way ?

Where or when do you feel closest to Jesus ? Why are those times or places more special ?

In general, when do you feel furthest from Jesus ? Explain.

Objectively speaking, do you really think Jesus is any closer to you or further away from you during the times you described ? Why or why not ?

Being still is so difficult in our culture. Why do we seem to be able to do everything except be still ? What is it about quiet or stillness that makes us so uncomfortable ?

Read Luke 10:38-42 Rev 2:1-5

What’s the connection between these two passages ? What does Jesus approve of – and disapprove of ?

What are some ways we substitute “doing” for “being” in our Christianity ? When can it be wrong to “do” good things – even good things for Jesus ?

**Worship**

Reflect on a time when you felt close to Jesus (possibly the first time). Where were you ? Who was with you ? What was it like ?

Reflect on where you are in your relationship with Jesus right now ? How does it compare ? What’s better / different ?

Sing ‘Be still’

**Witness**

Reflect daily on a psalm

Set aside 15 minutes a day this next week. Bring to God the things weighing on your heart. Spend some time listening .

Set aside 15 minutes a day this next week. Seek God regarding what church, cell should look like and your involvement in it. Spend some time listening .

**Session 5 – A Conversation with the Creator**

“So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children how much more will your heavenly father give good gifts to those who ask him.”

Matthew 7:11

**Welcome**

Activities :

1. Write a list of your top 5 priorities for today.
2. Stare at the person next to you. Who is the first to blink ?
3. Change to the person on your other side. Have an arm wrestling competition.
4. At the same time in 30 seconds one person explain how to make a sponge cake while the other explain how to arrange some flowers.

Out of the activities above which most resembles your prayer life ?

Or is it more like something else ? Explain

In terms of the your prayer life what can be good about each of these activities ?

**Word**

Read James 5:13-18

1. When have you seen a direct answer to prayer in your life or someone else’s ? Be specific. How were you changed by that ?
2. Now think of a time of personal (spiritual or emotional) drought in your life. What was it like ? What ended that drought ? How did you see God’s faithfulness during (or despite) that time ?
3. What prayer or prayers have you been praying for a long time ? Have you ever felt like giving up on those prayers ? What keeps you going ?

Open prayer for encouragement / long term prayers.

Read Matthew 7:7-11

1. What do you think Jesus meant, and didn’t mean here ?
2. Think about a time when you really prayed about something. What happened ? How were you own thoughts and motives refined during that time ?
3. Why don’t we always pray with the kind of expectance Jesus describes here ? Make a list of reasons.

Of all the reasons we just listed, which are the greatest obstacles to your own prayer life ? why ?

**Worship**

Think back to your prayer time from a few minutes ago. How can being thankful for what God has done in the past help you overcome these obstacles ?

**Witness**

Choose 1

* Pray a scripture (Psalm 23, 51 or John 17). Read or write the first verse then pause and reflect on its meaning, asking God to speak. Write down you thoughts. Continue working your way through the passage. At the end write a prayer based on what you feel God has said to you.
* Create a prayer diary putting a different topic for each day; friends, work, country. Each day pray specifically and expectantly, listening for God to speak. Ask questions in your prayers.
* Prayer walk your community. Pray for clubs, families etc. If you see someone have a chat then either with them or afterwards pray Gods blessing for them.

**Session 6 – Digging Deeper**

“Don’t copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

Romans 12:2

**Welcome**

Get one person to stand up and point to the direction they think North is.

Get them to close their eyes and spin round 3 times. Keeping their eyes closed get them to point to the direction North.

Show everyone the compass to see the true north. Were they right in there guesses ?

What landmarks did you use to decide which way was North ? How accurate were they ?

How accurate were you at pointing north after you finished spinning ?

When in your life have you felt as if you’d been spinning for so long that you didn’t know which way was up (north) ?

What do you use as a ‘compass’ when you have to make tough decisions ?

**Word**

Read : Romans 12:1-2, 2 Tim 3:14-17, Heb 4:12, Ps 1:2-3, Ps 119:105

What are the benefits of knowing God’s word, according to these passages ? according to you ?

How have you seen some of these benefits in your own life ?

Read Joshua 1:1-9 (read and spend 5 mins on your own reflecting on the following questions)

What’s the context of this passage ? In other words : what’s happening here ? When and where is this taking place ? What do you think the people in the passage are thinking and feeling at this moment ?

What words or phrases in this passage stands out for you ?

What’s the main thing God wanted his people in this passage to know ?

What’s God saying to you through this passage ? What’s one way you can take what God is saying and put it into practice ?

Read Joshua 1:1-9 aloud

What’s the difference between meditating on God’s word and just reading it ?

When (or how) has spending time in God’s word given you strength or success you wouldn’t have had otherwise ?

Place a phone and wallet / purse on the table

What’s so important about carrying these things around with you where ever you go ?

What do you think would happen if your bibles were as ‘joined to your hip’ as your phones / wallets are ?

How would giving God’s word time and priority in your life change how you live ? Be specific

**Witness**

Spend the week meditating on Ephesians 4:21-32.

Ask God to show you one thing to ‘let go’ something that is holding you back in your relationship with God. Also something to ‘put on’ that will draw you closer to Jesus.

**Worship**

Holy and anointed one

Jesus is the name we honour

**Session 7 – Worship – It’s not just singing**

“And from the throne came a voice that said, ‘Praise our God, all his servants, all who fear Him, from the least to the greatest’ “ Rev 19:5

**Welcome**

* What activity do you most enjoy doing with a friend ?
* How does that activity together show the other person that he or she is important to you ? How does it help you enjoy the activity more ?
* What do you do to show God that he’s important to you ?

**Word**

* When you think of worship, what words come to mind ?
* Out of the answers we gave, which ones do you think most fit God’s idea of worship ? Are there others we haven’t mentioned yet ?
* Do you think of worship more as a shared experience or a personal one ? Why ?
* Can worship be both shared and personal at the same time ? Explain (or better give examples ) ?
* Of the activities we’ve done over the last few weeks which ones have helped you connect to God the most ? Why ?
* Talk about a meaningful time or season of worship – of any kind – that you have had in the past. What made it so meaningful ?
* How has your idea of what worship is (and isn’t) changed during the course of your Christian life ? How has you own worship of God changed as a result ?

Read Rev 19 : 5-10, Rev 7: 9-17

* Does this scene excite you, make you uncomfortable, or does it just not resonate with you ? Explain your answer.
* The food wasn’t a wedding feast but it did provide anticipation. How does anticipation affect how much you will enjoy it later ?
* By the same token, how does (or should) knowing our eternal future with Jesus help us make worship – however we do it – a higher priority in our lives right now ?

**Worship**

Mixture of silence fixing our eyes on Jesus and worship praising our Lord.

**Witness**

* Meditate on Psalm 1, 19, 23, 104, 136, 139, 144 to 150
* It can be easy to just go through the motions in our devotional time. This week, consciously commit to not letting that happen. Picture god in His glory. Desire to encounter and worship Him with a sense of reverence, awe and devotion. Reflect on how this affects not only your worship but other parts of your life.

**Session 8 – We’re in this Together**

“Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ ? Any comfort from his love ? Any fellowship together in the Spirit ? Are your hearts tender and compassionate ? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.” Phil 2:1-2

**Welcome**

What is it about just hanging about that helps people loosen up and become comfortable with one another ? What else do we do to help lower our guard with each other ?

What keeps us from “getting real with other Christians ? Why ?

**Word**

Watch DVD “Finding Nemo” (0:24:14 – 0:26:53)

* What things in this clip remind you of the first time you walked into a church or when you first encounters another group of Christians ?
* When have you committed some of the mistakes the fish made ?
* When have you felt as Nemo did in this clip – wishing other Christians could see past their own quirks, habits and routines and see others ? Explain ?

Read John 17:20-26, Eph 4:1-6

* According to these passages in what ways do we already have unity as Christians ?
* Describe a time when you tried to go it alone – without being connected with a church or group. What was it like ?
* Describe a time when you’ve experienced God bring the church together for a purpose. What was that like ? What was the difference between working together and going alone ?

Watch DVD “Finding Nemo” (0:27:58 – 0:29:18)

* How did Gill’s scars and imperfections help him to help Nemo ? How did that help Nemo be truly accepted by the other fish ?
* When has someone who’s been through the same trials really been there for you ?
* Who do you know who is not only your friend but who also is someone who pushes you closer to Jesus ? Tell us a little bit about them.

ICE – Get two to hold hands with an ice cube between their hands. Can they keep their hands together until the ice melts ? (Be Bold !)

Read Phil 2:1-5

* What was it like as you held onto the ice – and it got colder ? Did it make it better or worse to know that your partner was going through the same thing ? Explain ?
* How does standing with others help us keep Jesus a priority in our lives, even maybe when things are tough ?
* If you could ask this group for advice or prayer on just one thing right now, what would it be ?

**Worship**

Seek ye First, Take my Life, Jesus you are Changing Me, From Heaven You Came

**Witness**

* Consider asking someone to join with you to help develop your spiritual friendship with Jesus.
* Think of an activity that you enjoy doing not associated with church. Consider who you could invite to join with you in that activity.

**Session 9 – The Holy Spirit and You**

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you live by its dictates you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.” Romans 8:12-14

**Welcome**

Why do you come to cell ?

**Word**

Read Galations 5:16-25

“It is interesting that the bible talks about the fruit of the Spirit rather than fruits. A tree may bear many apples, but all come from the same tree. In the same way, the Holy Spirit is the source of all fruit in our lives.” Billy Graham

* Do you agree with this quote ? Something in-between or disagree ?
* Which fruit listed in the passage are most evident in your life right now ? Which ones could do with a little more fertilizer ? Why ?
* How does living by the Spirit help us to produce the fruit of the Spirit ?
* Practically speaking, what does it mean for us to live by the Spirit ? What does it actually look like ? List some ideas.
* How would you explain to a friend who the Holy Spirit is and what He does ?
* What would you like someone to explain to you about the Holy Spirit ?

Read John 14:25-26, John 16:7-14, Acts 1:4-8, Romans 8:26-27, 1 Cor 2:9-15, 2 Cor 3:7-9, Gal 4:6-7, Eph 1:13-14

* List the key action words for each of the passages.
* Out of these key attributes of the Spirit, which ones have you seen at work in your own life ? Which ones are new or still kind of hard to grasp ? Explain.
* How might other people help us understand how the Spirit is trying to guide us ?
* On the other hand, how might others get in the way of us hearing what the Spirit is trying to tell us ?
* How can we better train our “Spiritual Ears” so we really know whether it’s the Spirt who is trying to guide us ? How could you do this in your own life ?

Read Gal 3:2-5

* Was there a time in your life that you can look back to and say ‘Yeah the Spirit had to have been in that’ ? What was it like ?
* Read verse 3 again. How have you seen this to be true in the church today ?
* Let’s take it to another level: How do you take - or how have you taken – things out of the spirits hands in your own life ? Why do you think you have done it ?
* What’s one way you need to trust God’s Spirit to work in your own life ? How can we as a group help in that ?

**Worship**

Be Still Let Your Living Water We bow Down

**Witness**

Get to know more about the Spirits work in your life. Spend some time reading and asking God to open up the passages Eph 4, 1 Cor 12.

Think about who you can invite to the Alpha meal.

**Session 10 : The Battle of your Life**

“For we are not fighting against flesh and blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places”

Eph 6:12

**Welcome**

Have you ever been bullied. If you were share a little about what it was like. What forms can it take ? What things did you do to keep the bully from bothering you ? Did it work ?

What advice would you give to your own children about dealing with a bully ?

**Word**

Read Eph 6:10-13

* What is your reaction to Paul’s statement that we are fighting against mighty powers in this dark world and against evil spirits in the heavenly places ? Does it make you frightened and insecure ? challenged, sceptical or something else ? explain ?

Watch “Lord of the Rings – The Two Towers” (1:05:53 to 1:08:26) (ch22&23 Ext Edition)

* What reason does Theoden give for not fighting ? Do you think they are good reasons or just an excuse ? Explain
* What do you think of Aragorn’s statement, “open war is upon you, whether you would risk it or not” ? Do you really believe you’re already in a spiritual battle ? Why or why not ?
* What makes it so hard to fight through these kinds of battles ? What helps you stay focused on God and His desires for you during those times ?

Read Gen 3:1-6, Luke 4:1-13

* How are these two accounts similar ? How are they different ?
* Look at the strategies Satan uses in each of these passages. How do you see these kinds of strategies used today ? What do they look like ?
* Why is it sometimes easier to believe the lies of Satan rather than Jesus’ promises ? What can we do to counter that ?
* Pass a balloon to each person. Using a marker pen write or draw on the balloon ways in which Jesus has changed the way you see yourself.
* Look at the comments before popping the balloon on your left.
* What are some of the ways the ,forces of evil’ try to ‘pop your balloon’ and keep you from being the person you know you are in Jesus ?

Read Eph 6:14-18

* Paul refers to several spiritual weapons here. Which of these weapons do you most rely upon most ? how ? Which of these spiritual weapons could you use and ‘upgrade’ in ?
* Now that we’ve looked at where each of us is most susceptible to attack and where our defences are weakest, what’s one thing you can do to more effectively fight your spiritual battles ?

**Worship**

Be Bold

**Witness**

Who can you invite to the Alpha supper ?

**Session 10 : The Battle of your Life (Alternative)**

“For we are not fighting against flesh and blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places”

Eph 6:12

**Welcome**

Have you ever been bullied. If you were share a little about what it was like. What forms can it take ? What things did you do to keep the bully from bothering you ? Did it work ?

What advice would you give to your own children about dealing with a bully ?

**Word**

Read Eph 6:10-13

* What is your reaction to Paul’s statement that we are fighting against mighty powers in this dark world and against evil spirits in the heavenly places ? Does it make you frightened and insecure ? challenged, sceptical or something else ? explain ?

Hold out your arms in front of you keeping them straight. How long can you hold them ?

* How could we have bent the rules to make it easier ?
* Have you ever felt a pull on you that you knew wasn’t just about you – whether you call it temptation, a spiritual battle or what ever ? What have you learned from those struggles ?
* Do you ever consider taking a short cut or doing something less than God’s will to lessen the pain of those kinds of experiences ?
* What makes it so hard to fight through these kinds of battles ? What helps you stay focused on God and His desires for you during those times ?

Read Gen 3:1-6, Luke 4:1-13

* How are these two accounts similar ? How are they different ?
* Look at the strategies Satan uses in each of these passages. How do you see these kinds of strategies used today ? What do they look like ?
* Why is it sometimes easier to believe the lies of Satan rather than Jesus’ promises ? What can we do to counter that ?
* Pass a balloon to each person. Using a marker pen write or draw on the balloon ways in which Jesus has changed the way you see yourself.
* Look at the comments before popping the balloon on your left.
* What are some of the ways the forces of evil’ try to ‘pop your balloon’ and keep you from being the person you know you are in Jesus ?

Read Eph 6:14-18

* Paul refers to several spiritual weapons here. Which of these weapons do you most rely upon most ? how ? Which of these spiritual weapons could you use and ‘upgrade’ in ?
* Now that we’ve looked at where each of us is most susceptible to attack and where our defences are weakest, what’s one thing you can do to more effectively fight your spiritual battles ?

**Worship**

Stand Up Stand Up for Jesus, Only by grace can we enter

**Witness**

Who can you invite to the Alpha supper ?

(jam 1:12-15)

**Session 11: Seeing Others as Jesus Does.**

‘ If you give special attention and a good seat to the rich person, but you say to the poor one, “ You can stand other there, or sit on the floor” – well, doesn’t this discrimination show that your judgements are guided by evil motives?’ James 2: 3-4

**Welcome**

Are there any foods here that made you say to yourself, I’m not trying that ? Are you reconsidering your decision after watching others eat it ? Why or why not ?

By the way what did you think of the music ?

Think of a time when your first impressions of someone turned out to be totally wrong (in a good way). What initially “turned you off” to that person ? What happened to change your perspective ?

**Word**

Give each person an envelope containing a picture:

* What’s your initial reaction to the picture in your envelope ? Would you invite this person to dinner if you had a chance ? Why or why not ?
* Why is it so easy to judge people we don’t even know ?
* On the other hand why do we play favourites with those who are more popular or influential, even when we do not always like them ?

Read James 2: 1-9

* How are these reactions like the reactions we first have to people who are different from us?
* What are some of the things that aren’t necessarily sinful but nonetheless give you a negative impression of people ? What do these things reveal about some of our own wrong motives ?

Read James 4: 1, 4-12

* What’s the connection between submitting to God so the devil will flee and judging others?
* How have you seen this kind of warfare in your own life? How do you deal with it now?

Hand out a piece of paper and pencil. Write a word or phrase that describe how you felt when you were unfairly rejected or judged by others – for what ever reason.

Exchange your paper with someone else and get each person to read the word or phrase aloud.

* What was harder – writing what you wrote or having it read aloud ? why ?
* What do these words tell you about how it feels when other people are unfairly judged ?

1 Corinthians 1: 25 – 31

* How does this passage help put things in perspective – in terms of how God sees you as well as how you should see others?
* What can you do to train yourself to other’s the way Jesus does ?

**Worship**

Only by Grace

Come let us sing of a wonderful love

**Witness**

The book of James has a lot more to say about our attitudes and actions towards others. This week work your way through each chapter meditating and asking God to speak to you as you read.

**Session 12: Sharing Your Life in Jesus**

‘No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so everyone will praise your heavenly father’ Matthew 5:15-16

**Welcome**

When have you been an eye witness to a big event ? How did being there and seeing it for yourself affect you ? How did it affect the way you shared it with others ?

Pass out some old newspapers. Let everyone look over them for about a minute.

* Do you recall any of the stories you see there ? Do any of them appear to be relevant to your life right now ? Why or why not ?
* What’s a ‘big story’ you remember that now makes you wonder how you got so worked up about it? How did you, and others, respond to it at the time ?
* The word ‘gospel’ means ‘good news’ – in fact, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the best news of all. Do we still treat it like news or more like … well these old news papers ? Why ?

**Word**

**Ask people to close their eyes while you read 1 John 1:1-4**

* Why is it important for us to know that John and the other disciples hear and saw and touched Jesus ?
* Discuss a time when you were able to share your own experience of Jesus with someone else, or when someone observed you faith and responded to it in some way. How did sharing your faith affect that person ? How did his or her responses affect you ?
* Tell about a time when you felt dark and disconnected from Jesus – even if you were already a Christian. What happened to ‘turn the lights on’ for you ?

**Read Matthew 5:14-16**

* What was it like to have the lights turned back on ?
* Keeping your own reactions to mind, why might some people prefer living in darkness to coming into Jesus’ light ?
* Do you think some people need a spotlight on them to ‘get it’ when it comes to Jesus ? Explain.
* How can we help people’s eyes adjust to the light of Jesus ? What do we need to change in ourselves so we can help others see that light ?

Be honest : What holds you back from letting your light shine more than it does right now ?

**Read 1 John 1 : 5-9**

* How can being honest about our sins and flaws actually help others see Jesus more clearly ? How have you seen this to be true in your own life ?
* What could help you live out your life in Jesus more openly – so that both the people you care about and those you don’t even know and see it ?

**Worship**

Light a candle and turn off the lights. Encourage everyone to reflect and confess privately before God how they have hidden the light of Jesus from others. Ask God to give you the courage and wisdom to truly ‘ let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly father.’

Light of the world This little light of mine

**Witness**

Read 1 John one chapter a day and ask the following questions :

What does this passage say ?

How do I need to change because of what I’ve read ?

**Session 13: What Now ?**

‘Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us’ Hebrews 12:1

**Welcome**

* Can you remember the topics we have covered as we have worked our way through this book ?
* What expectations did you have when you started these studies, if any ?
* How did your actual experience compare to your expectations ?
* What would you say was the most memorable moment of this series ?

**Word**

**Read John 15:1-17**

How have you felt more connected to Jesus – and to other Christians – over the past few months ?

How have you felt God pruning you over the last few months ? What’s been the fruit of that process so far ?

What’s one way you need to remain in Jesus, in a way you really haven’t until now ?

Reflect / Discuss with the person next to you

The most important thing God has shown me through these studies (last 6 months) is ……..

In response to what God has shown me and to how God has worked in my life during this study. I’ll respond to God’s challenge ….

Personally by ………..

In my relationship by …………..

In my world by ……………..

Read Hebrews 12:1-3

* How have you seen some of the things you’ve learned about during this season modelled by others ? How has it inspired you to keep running the race (or to really start running it)? Be specific
* How can members of this group support you as you take the next steps God is calling you to take ?

In a circle, pass a loaf of bread around. Take a piece of bread and as you pass it, pause, and thank God for the person you are passing it to. Try and pray specific thanks / blessings.

Finish with a closing prayer

**Be Still** for the presence of the Lord the Holy One is here

Come bow before Him now with reverence and fear

In Him no sin is found we stand on holy ground

Be still for the presence of the Lord the Holy one is here

Be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around

He burns with Holy fire with splendour He is crowned

How awesome is the sight our radiant king of light

Be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around

Be still for the power of the Lord is moving in this place

He comes to cleanse and heal to minister his grace

No work too hard for Him in faith receive from Him

Be still for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

**Only by grace can we enter, only by grace can we stand;**

Not by our human endeavour, but by the blood of the lamb.

In to your presence you call us, you call us to come.

In to your presence you draw us, and now by your grace we come.

Now by your grace we come.

Lord, if you mark our transgressions who would stand ?

Thanks to you grace we are cleansed by the blood of the lamb

**Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,**

And all these things shall be added unto you,

Hal-le-lu, Hal-le-lu-iah,

Ask and it shall be given unto you, Seek and ye shall find

Knock and the door shall be opened unto you,

Hal-le-lu, Hal-le-lu-iah,

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word

That proceeds from the mount of God

Hal-le-lu, Hal-le-lu-iah,

If the son shall set you free, Ye shall be free indeed

Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free

Hal-le-lu, Hal-le-lu-iah,

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, He shall direct your paths

In all your ways acknowledge Him

Hal-le-lu, Hal-le-lu-iah,

**Lord, the light of Your love is shining in the midst of the darkness, shining**

Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us, set us free by the truth You now bring us

Shine on me, shine on me

*Shine, Jesus shine, fill this land with the father’s glory,*

*Blaze spirit blaze, set our hearts on fire*

*Flow river flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;*

*Send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light*

Lord I come to your awesome presence, From the shadows into your radiance

by the blood I may enter Your brightness, search me, try me, consume all my darkness

shine on me, shine on me

As we gaze on Your kingly brightness, So our faces display Your likeness

Ever changing from glory to glory, Mirrored here may our lives tell your story

shine on me, shine on me