**Cell Group Bible Study**

**The First Letter to the Corinthians**

**Introduction**

Welcome to the start of our church’s sermon series and cell group bible study on the Book of First Corinthians! We will be embarking on this journey for next five months from July till November.

*Why study First Corinthians?*

1. As part of our vision of ‘**Rebuilding God’s House’** for the year, this letter is a very helpful New Testament teaching on not only personal but corporate seeking of God’s will for us.
2. The Corinthian church faced issues which we can relate to and identify with. We can learn to adopt God’s perspective to the issues we are facing.
3. Many teachings and doctrines are crucial to build our understanding of our faith and hope in God’s coming kingdom

*What is a suggested cell group and bible study format?*

1. You can incorporate the elements of the **4 W’s** for your cell meeting: **Welcome** (personal thanksgiving), **Worship** (songs), **Word** (bible study) and **Works** (prayer for each other and upcoming events of the church).
2. Each of the bible study will consist of three elements:
	1. **Introductory question** for discussion (related to the focus of the bible study)
	2. **Discussion question(s)** based on the passage
	3. **Possible application(s)** in daily life
3. You may not include all of the elements in a single cell group session but please don’t ignore any of these elements over the longer term.

*What can be helpful for cell members to be more involved?*

1. Everyone should try to read the bible passage and prepare for the questions beforehand
2. Cell members can be rostered to lead in the various elements within the cell meeting: welcome, worship, bible study or prayer
3. In smaller groups, cell members can keep in touch with one another about how they have been applying the lessons learnt in the sermon/bible study throughout the week. You can also ask cell members to share and update about their previous week’s resolution that they have set for themselves.

*What is helpful for you as a cell leader to have a fruitful meeting?*

1. Keep your cell group meeting and your members in prayer throughout the week
2. Encourage everyone to share and thanks them for sharing – there are no wrong answers and each opinion should be valued
3. Look to affirm what your members are sharing – especially about how God may be speaking or leading them in their lives
4. Feel free to stop at any point to elaborate more if the Spirit is leading you to – **you don’t have to complete all of the discussion questions**
5. Look to end every meeting in prayer committing everyone and the week ahead to God’s blessing and keeping

**Cell Group Bible Study (21 Aug)**

**1 Corinthians 7**

**Theme – Seeking the Source of Happiness**

Key Verse:

*“I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that* ***you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord****.”* 1 Cor 7:35

***A. Introductory Question***

1. What was one experience or achievement that brought you happiness in the past week?

***B. Discussion Questions***

**[Read 1 Corinthians 7:25-40]**

The Apostle Paul writes, “*What I mean, brothers and sisters, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they do not; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.*” (v29-31)

1. Do you think that Paul is advocating an attitude of disinterest and giving up on life? If not, what do you think he means by what he writes?

The Apostle Paul then writes, *“I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord’s affairs—how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord’s affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.* (v32-35)

1. Paul makes a series of astounding declarations like “*an unmarried man is concerned about Lord’s affairs*” and “*a married man’s… interests are divided*” (v32). To what extent do you agree with his statements? What is his main point in this paragraph?

***C. Application***

Many people think that it is the state of marriage that ultimately brings them happiness. And they wish very much to be married. The Apostle Paul does not think so.

Instead he concludes that “*if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. In my judgment,* ***she is happier if she stays as she is***” (v39-40).

1. How does your source of happiness compare to what Paul recommends for Christians? (This can be part of a group sharing at the end.)

*For personal reflection*:

1. Are you willing to seek happiness from doing God’s will rather than fulfilling your own pleasures?
2. For those who are married, what do you think is a right balance between focusing on your marriage and family vs serving God in ministry?