

Cell Group Bible Study 2 Corinthians Sermon Series 2024

Introduction

Welcome to the start of our church's sermon series and cell group bible study on 2 Corinthians! We will be embarking on this journey for 13 weeks based on the sermon series.

Why study 2 Corinthians passages?

1. To **encourage** us as his people to **trust** in God's leading in our lives, even through trials and sufferings. God is sovereign in all things and works in all circumstances for our good (Romans 8:28). We can commit all our ways to him with joy and thanksgiving.
2. To **spur** us on towards **authentic ministry** for Christ in his church. The work of his ministry takes place in every aspect of our lives, as soon as we acknowledge him as Lord and Saviour, to shine his light to the world through word and deed.
3. To **grow** in **fruitfulness** as God's specific will and leading for COA in 2024. By participating in this together, we can experience growing together and make this year one that is a most fruitful, meaningful and blessed one.

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 planning and participating in upcoming events of the church).
2. Each of the bible study will consist of three elements:
 - a. **Introductory question** for discussion (related to the focus of the bible study)
 - b. **Discussion question(s)** based on the passage
 - c. **Possible application(s)** in daily life
3. You may not need to include all of the elements in a single cell group session but do not neglect any of the **4 W's** over the long term.

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

1. Everyone should try to **read the bible passage** beforehand or during the meeting.
2. Cell members can be **rostered** to lead in the various elements within the cell meeting: welcome, worship, bible study or prayer. This will help involve more members for the cell.
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.

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

1. Start and end every meeting **on time**. This honours the commitment that all the cell members have made to attend cell on time.
2. Encourage **everyone** to share and thank them for sharing – there are no wrong answers (unless it contradicts what God says!) 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 if the Spirit is leading you to – **you don't have to complete all of the discussion questions**.
5. Keep your cell group meeting and your members in **prayer** throughout the week.

2 Corinthians Bible Study (28 Jul)
#4 – Treasure in Jars of Clay in Ministry

Big Idea – Though we deteriorate outwardly, we are renewed inwardly daily by the Spirit

Key Verse: *“We have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.”* 2 Corinthians 4:7

A. Introductory Question

1. Share about an experience where you almost gave up but held on. What was its outcome?

B. Discussion Questions

[Read 2 Corinthians 4:1-18]

In this chapter, the Apostle Paul goes straight to the heart of the problem of why the gospel is being rejected by the people of this world: *“the **god of this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ”* (v4). At its heart, the unbelief of non-Christians is a spiritual issue and not simply an intellectual or emotional one.

2. Who is *“the god of this world”* and what is Paul’s purpose in framing spiritual opposition to the gospel in this way?

If the problem is fundamentally spiritual in nature, then the solution must be a spiritual one too. Paul then states that it is ultimately God who saves. He *“has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”* (v6).

3. What does this verse tell you about the reality of how we are saved by God?

Yet we as God’s ambassadors also play a key role in the ministry of the gospel to the world. God uses **the example of our upright behaviours and lifestyles** (v2), **our focused proclamation of Jesus Christ in words** (v5), as well as **the difficult experiences we go through** (v8) to show others about the reality of the gospel. All of these is summed up in Paul’s declaration: *“We have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us”* (v7).

4. What do the terms “treasure” and “jars of clay” refer to? What is Paul’s ultimate aim in highlighting the contrast between the two?

C. Application

“Do not lose heart!” is Paul’s clarion call to us in this chapter as he starts and ends with this phrase (v1, 16). A bible scholar explains that it means not “relaxing one’s efforts, losing heart in the midst of difficulties, letting go, interrupting one’s perseverance before attaining one’s goal, or giving up rather than continuing the fight.” They can all be summed up as not giving up. The reason we can persevere is because of God’s work of renewing us inwardly on a daily basis (v16).

- Who or what are you looking at to encourage you daily?
- In what ways can we receive the inward renewal and strengthening that the Holy Spirit gives daily?
- How can we minister the gospel to others in a most powerful and effective way?

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:8