

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 (22 Sep)**#12 – Grace of God in Ministry****Big Idea – God’s grace is everything that we need**

Key Verse: *But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”*
2 Corinthians 12:9

A. Introductory Question

1. What was one difficulty that you encountered this week? Was the difficulty due to your fault or the fault of others? Share with one another.

B. Discussion Questions**[Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-10]**

During his ministry, Paul had visions from God to guide him and encourage him. It was by a vision that he was called to Macedonia (Acts 16:9). When the ministry was difficult in Corinth, God encouraged Paul by a vision (Acts 18:9-10). After his arrest in Jerusalem, Paul was again encouraged by a vision from God (Acts 23:11). Yet the vision that Paul referred to here seems to be different in nature from the rest.

2. How was his vision described in verses 2-4 different from all the other visions he had received? Assuming that Paul was referring to himself, why might he speak of himself in the third person?

The thorn in Paul’s flesh was described as a messenger of Satan sent to torment him (2 Cor 12:7). Yet in the same verse, Paul affirmed that this thorn was “given” to him by someone. Paul did not ask for the thorn nor did anything to deserve of the thorn.

3. Who do you think was the ultimate source of the thorn in Paul’s life: Satan or God? What was the purpose of the thorn given to Paul?

God had another message for Paul – a message of grace. The tense of the verb in 2 Corinthians 12:9 is important: “But he *said* to me.” God gave Paul a message that stayed with him throughout his period of difficulty that sustained him through his trial.

4. What message did the Lord give to Paul? In what way was God’s grace sufficient to sustain Paul through his weakness?

C. Application

Paul knew from the outset of his ministry that he would suffer for Jesus’ sake (Acts 9:15-16). God reaffirmed this truth to him as his ministry continued (Acts 20:29). As a result, Paul embraced suffering as God’s good purpose to help him grow in godly character and make him effective for ministry.

5. How do you view suffering in your own life? How does God use suffering in your life for your benefit both in spiritual growth and ministry?

Instead of boasting about his credentials, Paul boasted about his suffering. He says, “I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Cor 12:9)

6. Do you think you can ever reach a stage of glorying in your weaknesses and suffering as Paul did? What is/are the step(s) that you will need to take to arrive at that stage?