

Follow Me on Monday



A short course on
Whole Life Discipleship
FACILITATOR GUIDE



Course Overview

This short course, *Follow Me On Monday*, is aimed to encourage us in our Christian discipleship in daily life and work. Our life in Christ has a rhythm of going out from and returning to the praise and sacramental worship of Sunday, expressing and exploring this within, and gathering it from, our life in the world. Our Christian calling is, quite simply and profoundly, to follow Jesus. He goes before us into our world and there we shall find him, as he promised. To this discipleship we bring the whole of us, all our faculties, all our senses in our thinking, our acting and our experiencing. The five elements of the course are entitled: “Faithful Following”, “Wholly Living”, “Called to Partnership”, “Raising our Eyes” and “Go in Peace”.

The first element (“Faithful Following”) roots us in the beginning as we find a fresh understanding of calling (our vocation to follow), and challenges us to move beyond some stereotypes that are attendant upon the idea of vocation.

The second element (“Wholly Living”) explores the intimate relationship between wholeness and holiness with a view to discovering anew what a spirituality in daily life might be for ourselves. It summons us to move beyond the implicit (and sometimes explicit) divide between sacred and secular.

The third element (“Called to Partnership”) addresses our understandings of work and all that occupies us creatively. This is about much more than “jobs and occupations” (where employment can be variously good, bad, hard to come by, transient). It is an invitation to explore discipleship in relation to whatever brings us fulfilment, self worth and thanksgiving.

The fourth element (“Raising our Eyes”) reflects on the significance of transfiguration in relation to our discipleship in daily life. It encourages us to read afresh the story of the Transfiguration and to find its meaning for ourselves in putting paths of spirituality into practice. We reflect on what it is to see the presence of Christ in our midst (often unexpectedly), and to respond faithfully and creatively.

The fifth element (“Go in Peace”) is taken from the dismissal at the Eucharist: “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord”. It encourages us to reflect on our journey back to Sunday, gathering up all our experiences through the week, and on what it means to be the church in both gathered and dispersed mode.

Each element is structured in a similar way with interactive exercises and some guided reading to encourage creative individual-centred learning and sharing with fellow participants. There is an emphasis throughout on enjoyment and discovery.

We hope you enjoy this opportunity to explore your discipleship in daily life.



Facilitator Guidelines

Follow me on Monday aims to help participants to explore their discipleship with others in a style of discussion that is open, respectful of differences and encourages thinking and learning by discovery and exploration. There are no 'right' answers but there is an encouragement to reflect on our assumptions and beliefs that underpin our discipleship and be willing to learn from others.

Tips for Effective Facilitation

1. The facilitator's role is to stay in control of the **process** of discussion without controlling the **content** of the discussion and to ensure that the environment for the discussion is respectful, fair, open, secure and affirming
2. Always make sure the group members know each other at the start and have a clear time set aside for social activity and refreshment.
3. Ensure that everyone speaks early on and that everyone has a fair and equal amount of time to talk about their views. Invite everyone to contribute and make it clear that everyone has a turn. People learn so much from hearing the experiences of others.
4. Use pair working as appropriate. It can be very helpful to invite participants to pair up and discuss the questions on the worksheets for a few minutes before sharing their responses from the pair. This helps to ensure everyone contributes.
5. Listen attentively to everyone's input and pull out some main points to demonstrate that they have been heard.
6. Always seek to start discussions by exploring people's experiences of the topic under discussion. We are seeking to encourage a valuing of experience and a reflection on it.
7. Make sure you explain what your role is to the other members of the group and that you are not a 'teacher' who will impart knowledge or an 'expert' on the subject matter. It's OK for you not to know but encourage the group to find out and use other resources
8. Don't feel that you have to be an expert. Other members of the group may know much more than you so ask others with expertise for their views.
9. Follow the process outlined on the downloadable worksheet and trust that it will address the issues whilst still feeling free to adapt it as you see fit.
10. Trust that the group already has the answer to most questions so don't feel reluctant to ask them what they think
11. Make sure there is time at the end for the final ponder and reflection which needs to be shared within the group.

Session 1 Faithful Following

Overview

The invitation of Jesus is simply to 'follow me'. As we seek to live as disciples who follow, we have to work out our own sense of calling or vocation. We want to explore a broad understanding of the word vocation which can apply to everyone and makes sense of following Jesus in our work and daily life. In this session we will explore what having a calling or vocation means and particularly, how we can work out how best to follow as the unique person we have each been made to be.

This is your worksheet; for notes, ideas and questions.

Facilitator

Welcome everyone to the session. Remind people that the worksheet is for their use and notes only. Ensure introductions if there are new group members. Offer a quick overview of this session, which is the first in a series of 5.

Facilitator

Introduce the question. Invite people to think for a minute about the word 'vocation' and the different contexts in which it is generally used.

Question

Where or how have you heard the word 'vocation' used?

Facilitator

Draw out the range of responses from the group. These are likely to include the following ; vocation = non academic (e.g. NVQ), relates to particular professions (e.g. nursing, teaching, childcare), ordained ministry or religious life, a job or a career (e.g. 'vocational guidance'). Re-state the aim of this session which is to explore 'vocation' in its widest sense.

Facilitator

Introduce the following pictures. A larger full colour version of these pictures are available as a separate download, copies of which can be printed for the group members to share. Invite the group to look at the images and think about which people are traditionally thought of as having 'a vocation'.

Usually responses identify numbers 5,12 and 14 as the way the church sees vocation. Numbers 2,4, 6 and 7 are often thought of as representing 'caring roles' with a strong sense of vocation. Numbers 1,8,9 and 10 are seen as neutral work, whereas 3,11,13 and 15 may cause some discussion about the nature of the work and its value

Discussion

Which of these people traditionally are thought of as 'having a vocation'

A separate handout with the larger, full colour versions of these images is available.

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2



3



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5



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7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14



15



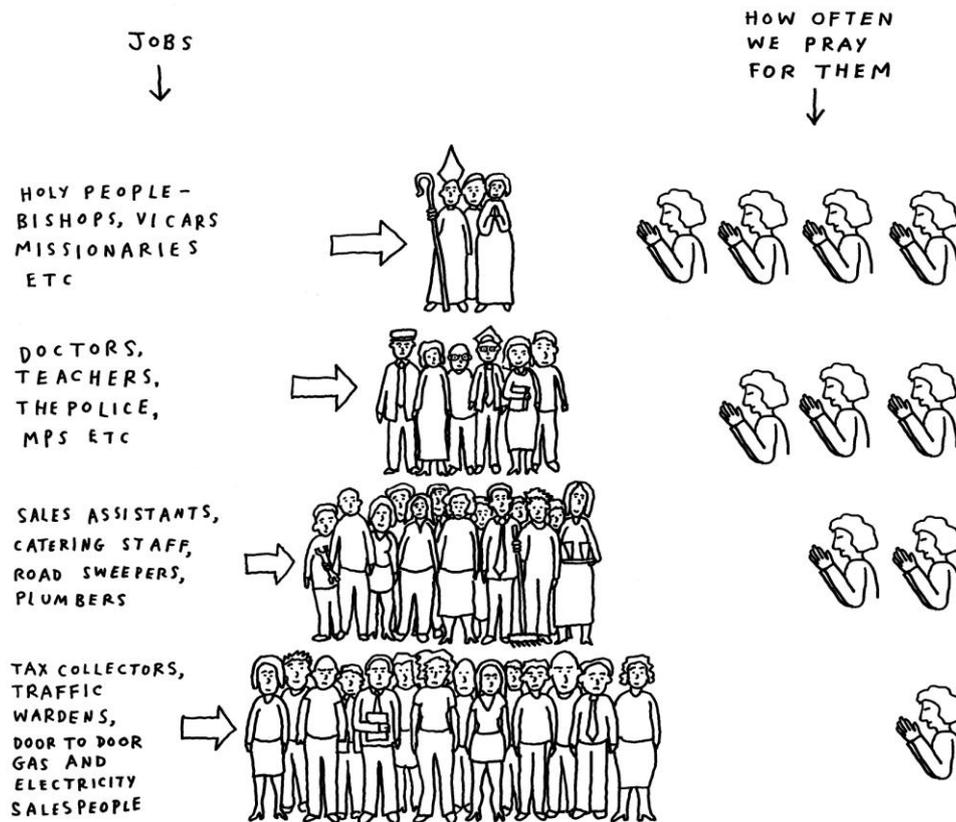
Facilitator

Explore with the group what is helpful or unhelpful about how we traditionally see the idea of vocation. What impact does this have on people who might think that they don't have a vocation?

Facilitator

Introduce The Hierarchy of Vocations cartoon and ask the group to reflect on how this relates to their experience of how the church typically views the vocations of ordinary people. Ask the group to reflect on what they hear during the intercessions, for example – who is included? In what order?

A HIERARCHY OF VOCATIONS



©Dave Walker

Discussion

Does this view seem familiar? What does this imply about how the church typically views the vocations of 'ordinary' people?

Facilitator

Ask the group to think about the 'hidden message' that is given out to those who are working in ordinary jobs.

Facilitator

Up to this point, we have been thinking about vocation and how it is defined by specific jobs or roles. As we go through the session, our aim is to see vocation as something that is not limited or defined by specific roles or jobs..

Facilitator

Introduce the next question. Invite the group to spend a minute or two thinking about this question. It may be best to encourage people to work in pairs.

Question

What does it mean to have a vocation or calling?

Facilitator

Invite each member of the group to share their responses; you may need to go round the group several times to gather all responses. Encourage the group to look at the list of 20 responses from other groups, and identify any points which have not been raised.

Comparison

Here are some responses from previous groups who have considered this question

1. Acknowledgement and deepening understanding of becoming the person that God has made me to be
2. A calling by God to a specific task
3. A burning desire to give of oneself to others and sharing talents
4. Reason you were made –what you are here to do
5. God’s calling might not even be church based
6. Being called by God, others and yourself to be someone you might not be now
7. It takes time to discover it - a journey with God
8. A gift from God to be discovered and engaged with
9. Searching for that task / my song / situation / that makes me feel most fully alive
10. Having a calling to make a change and serve your community
11. Helping people to work with God
12. To show the presence of Christ in your life to the world - finding the way to go and the place to show it
13. Sense of purpose and direction
14. Allowing yourself and your skills to be used
15. Having a role in the ministry and mission of the church and in your life
16. Working together as the body of Christ – team work
17. To make a change in the world
18. Appreciation of God’s purpose in my life
19. To give something of what God has given to me and to open that to others
20. A call to reveal God’s love to the world

Facilitator

Invite the group members to highlight the statements in this list which most reflect their understanding of vocation and have a general discussion about any points people want to raise or about new insights which this may have given.

Activity

Highlight those statements above that you feel are most like your understanding of vocation.

Facilitator

Introduce the perspective ‘Vocation’ from ‘An Altar in the World’ by Barbara Brown Taylor. Read this through. When you have finished, invite the group to think about the question below – give them a minute or two to gather their thoughts.

Perspective

Vocation

“Earlier in my life, I thought there was one particular thing I was supposed to do with my life. I thought that God had a purpose for me and my main job was to discover what it was.....

Then one night when my whole heart was open to hearing from God what I was supposed to do with my life, God said, “anything that pleases you”

“What?” I said, resorting to words again “what kind of answer is that?”

“Do anything that pleases you,” the voice in my head said again, “and belong to me”.

At one level that answer was no help at all, the ball was back in my court again, where God had left me all kinds of room to lob it wherever I wanted. I could be a priest or a circus worker. God really did not care. Whatever I decided to do for a living, it was not **what** but **how** I did it that mattered. God had suggested an overall purpose but was not going to supply the particulars for me. If I wanted a life of meaning, I was going to have to apply the purpose for myself.”“Do anything that pleases you,” the voice in my head said again, “and belong to me”.

*From ‘An Altar in the Word’ by Barbara Brown Taylor
(Canterbury Press 2009)*

Question

What do you find that is helpful or unhelpful in this passage?

Facilitator

Ask the group to comment on what they find helpful or unhelpful. People are most likely to comment on the realisation that vocation has to be worked out – it is not handed to us on a plate. Highlight the idea of ‘belonging to God’ and ask people what they feel this means.

Facilitator

*Introduce the What and How activity, which builds on the Perspective above from Barbara Brown Taylor - ‘it was not **what** but **how** I did it that mattered’. This activity aims to encourage the group to focus on **how** they engage in their different roles. Invite the group members to make a list of some of the different kinds of activities they do in their life (e.g. their work, leisure activities, family, church etc). List these in the left hand column. On the right hand column, invite the group to list how they go about these activities (e.g. purposeful words which show the particular characteristics which they bring to these activities). For example ; ‘What’ might include work, family life, community interests, hobbies etc. ‘How’ might include terms such as hospitable, reconciling, peace-making, nurturing, patiently etc..*

Activity

What and How

In the quotation above, Barbara Brown Taylor differentiates between ‘what’ and ‘how’ ; “it was not **what** I did but **how** I did it that mattered”. List all the different aspects of your life in the left hand column – ‘what’ you do. On the right hand column, think about words which best describe particular purposeful characteristics that shape how you do things.

What do you do?	How do you do it?

Facilitator Invite each group member to share some thoughts from their **What** and **How** lists. Explore in what ways it helpful it is to think about the distinction between What and How in terms of our vocation or calling.

Facilitator Introduce the next question. Invite the group to summarise key points which have come out of this exploration on vocation which relates to their discipleship in Christ.

Question **As I follow Jesus on Monday, what does this activity tell me about the kind of person God is calling me to be?**

Facilitator *Invite the group to consider this point for reflection during the week. It is likely that the places where people felt most alive are closest to their calling. We will explore this theme again in the next 2 sessions*

During the week, you might like to reflect on :



What were the points where you felt most alive this week?

Facilitator *Encourage people to spend few minutes pondering on what they feel they have learned from the session.*

Ponder **What did you learn from this session, and what difference might this make to your discipleship?**

Facilitator

Ask group members to share quickly 1 or 2 points and reflect back any common themes or issues that need to be explored elsewhere

Closing Prayer

Lord,
Whatever we build,
Give us a glimpse of glory.
Whatever we make,
Give us a sense of wonder.
Wherever we travel,
Give us a sense of reverence.
Whoever we meet,
Give us a sense of awe.
Whatever we do,
Give us a sense of achievement.
Whatever our situation,
Give us knowledge of you.
Help us to see that everything is in your care
And that you allow us to share in your glory

From 'Powerlines: Celtic Prayers About Work' by David Adam (Triangle, 1992)

SESSION OUTLINE

Think about refreshments – beginning, middle or end? We would work on the assumption that refreshments will take around 15 mins in addition to the following time framework.

The suggested timings below are based on a group of between 6 and 8 people – timings should therefore be adjusted if there are more or less in the group.

The timings given for discussion are flexible and can be reduced / extended as time allows. It is always better to ensure that there is adequate time at the end for final reflections and planning the next session, even if this means cutting discussion short.

Time for each element of the session is given, in addition to a ‘counter’ for the time taken up to that point, ending at 1 hour 30 mins.

5-10 mins (10 min)	<p>Introductions – ensure all group members know each other</p> <p>Distribute worksheets to all group members</p> <p>Introduce the topic using the topic overview</p>
5 mins (15 mins)	<p>Make notes on worksheet for the following questions, share answers with group:</p> <p>Question : How have you heard the term ‘vocation’ used?</p>
5 mins (20 min)	<p>Activity : Look at the photographs – which of the following people have traditionally thought of as having a vocation?</p>
5 mins (25 min)	<p>Look at the cartoon.</p> <p>Question : Does this view seem familiar?</p>
10 mins (35 mins)	<p>Question : What does it mean to have a vocation or calling?</p> <p>Compare responses with the list</p>
10 mins (45 mins)	<p>Perspective : Vocation</p> <p>Discussion and question : What do you find that is helpful or unhelpful in this passage?</p>
15 mins (1 hour)	<p>Activity : What and How</p>
15 mins (1 hour 15 mins)	<p>Question : As I follow Jesus on Monday, what does this activity about the kind of person God is calling me to be?</p>
5 mins (1 hour 20 min)	<p>Introduce reflection for the week, and final ponder</p>
5 mins (1 hour 25 min)	<p>Practicalities for next session (venue, who will lead etc.)</p>
5 mins (1 hour 30 min)	<p>Closing Worship</p>

Session 2 Wholly Living

Overview

There is a divide which still tends to dominate our view of the Christian life. This is the separation between the 'sacred' and 'secular'. What do we mean by these terms and how do these ideas shape or limit our thinking about the activity of God in daily work and life? What does it mean to live beyond the divide? This session encourages you in your discipleship, to recognise and respond to the 'sacred' in the ordinary and helps us to think more widely about our encounter with God in daily work and life.

This is your worksheet; for notes, ideas and questions

Facilitator

Welcome everyone to the session. Remind people that the worksheet is for their use and notes only. Ensure introductions if there are new group members. Offer a quick overview of this session, which is the second in a series of 5.

Facilitator

Introduce the activity 'Sacred or Secular'. The images are available either as a PowerPoint presentation to download, which can be shown using a laptop and/or projector, or the images can be printed as PDFs and shown to the group in turn. Show each of the images in turn briefly. Invite the group to call out a response to the question 'Is this image more sacred or secular?' The exercise should not be laboured, the group will generally be clear for the first few images but will progressively become less certain (or see them as both sacred and secular), and by the end of the exercise will come to the conclusion by themselves that it is very difficult to classify them simply. This helps to establish the view that we are living beyond the sacred-secular divide and these terms are unhelpful, even though they still influence our thinking.

Activity

Sacred or Secular?

Look at the series of images and call out whether you would define the image as 'sacred' or 'secular'.

Facilitator

Introduce the quotation from Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy (also known as 'Woodbine Willy' from the First World War). Ask the group for their reactions to the quotation and discuss in what ways it is helpful or unhelpful to speak of a sacred-secular divide.

Discussion

"If our finding God in churches leads to our losing him in factories, it were better to tear down the churches, for God must hate the sight of them."

Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy (1883-1929)

In what ways is it helpful or unhelpful to speak of a 'sacred-secular divide'?

Facilitator

Introduce the perspectives from Alan Ecclestone and Teilhard de Chardin and ask the group to think about the challenges of living the vision of life implied in these quotations.

Perspective

All of Life is Spiritual

"All of life is spiritual, for all is part of God's creation. There is no division between sacred and secular, work and worship, religion and politics. Spirituality is not apart from our daily lives, it is our daily lives. But it is a life with a cutting edge not avoiding the pain or fear."

Alan Ecclestone, Priest and Spiritual Writer (1904-1992)

“We are not human beings having spiritual experiences, we are spiritual beings having human experiences”

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin , French Philosopher (1881 – 1955)

Question

What are some of the challenges of living this vision of life?

Facilitator

Ask the group to share their responses to this question. Try to draw out some of the differences of opinion. From people’s experience, what are some of the challenges? Can group members think of examples where these divisions have been apparent, or examples of where these divisions have been overcome?

Facilitator

Introduce the picture of the chemical plant at sunset. A coloured version of this image is available to download. Ask the group to think how easy or difficult it is to see God’s creation in this image. The responses are likely to be that the group will see God’s creation in the sunset and light, or in the contrast between light and dark. Some people may see a sharp divide between God’s creativity and man’s creativity, and not see them connected. Others will see God’s creativity working through man, in the technology and inventiveness of the chemical plant itself. Others will see God in the processes of transformation that are going on, as raw materials are turned into beneficial products. The discussion will clearly raise the issue of man’s impact on the environment and some will see that the capacity to reflect is itself God given, and part of his creativity in helping us to think about ourselves and our wider impact.

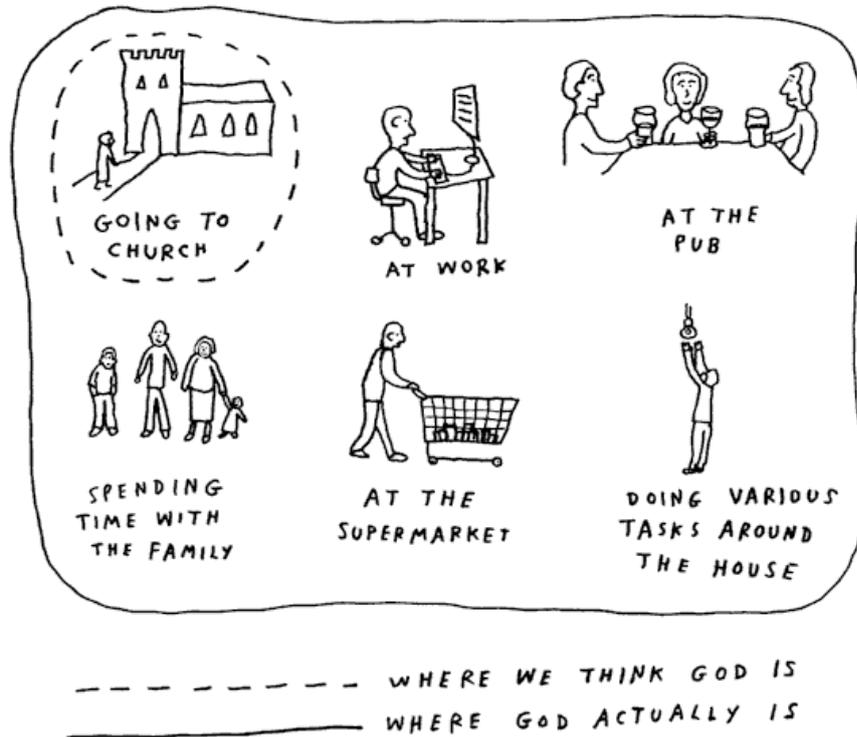
Discussion

‘All of life is spiritual for all is part of God’s creation’. Where do you find it easy to see God’s creation in this image? Where do you find it difficult?



Facilitator

Introduce the cartoon ‘Where is God?’ and the discussion. Encourage a wide view of what it means for our life to be spiritual in the context of everyday. For example, the group might highlight the nurturing aspect of supermarket shopping, the community aspect of sitting in the pub, the creativity of work etc.



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Facilitator

You may like to make the connection here between this view of 'Where is God' and the discussion in the first session (FMI Faith Following), about it's not what we do, but how we do it.

Discussion

'Spirituality is not apart from our daily life, it is our daily life. In what ways do you see these activities as being spiritual?'

Facilitator

Encourage the group to broaden the view of what is spiritual. Point out the pun in the session title 'Wholly Living' – how do we connect holiness and wholeness?

Facilitator

Introduce this perspective called 'Godly Work' and have the group read it and reflect on it. Invite the group to discuss in pairs what they find helpful or unhelpful about this perspective.

Perspective

Godly Work?

Because peoples occupation's often centre life's meaning so powerfully, does that mean that they are bending the knee in de facto obeisance to secular gods, kingdoms and morals of a workaday world, saving Sundays for Christian activity? What does the church say to someone who is out in the world of commerce and industry, someone whose Christian vocation seems challenged by service to idols of mammon. Typically, the church's response is a palliative suggestion that one's job can be a springboard for kindness towards others, a platform for keeping the Ten Commandments, an opportunity to make a witness, a location for a ministry of presence, or a context from which arrow prayers may be shot. This message implies that, while so-called secular careers have some value as a service to others, they possess no inherent value in their own right. But

what about the welder who believes welding per se is his Christian activity? What about the homemaker who believes she shares a personal delight with God in a good cheese soufflé. Would it be possible that God motivates the engineer who works on fuel cells or sustains a man who collects garbage?

Could it be that the knack for finding good teaching methods is not just hard work but also the prompting and gift giving of the Holy Spirit? Could the promise of Christ be part of what motivates the designer who wants to improve sewage disposal? Are not all these equally cases of godly work?

*From 'After Sunday: A Theology of Work' by Armand Larive
(Continuum, 2004)*

Discussion

What do you find helpful or unhelpful about this perspective?

Facilitator

Ask the group to share their responses to this discussion. We will explore the theme of working in partnership with God in the next session (FM 3 Called to Partnership).

Facilitator

Introduce the activity called 'Connecting with God'. This activity is designed to help the group members to think about ordinary things that they do or use in their everyday life, and how they might use those to connect with God as part of their wholly living. Encourage people to share their symbols and talk about what makes the images meaningful. You might like to give some examples from your own experience.

Activity

Connecting with God

The Jewish Menorah (Exodus 25.31-40) was the seven branched candle stick that stood in the Temple in Jerusalem. In Jewish folklore, the candlestick represents the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden, and its oil (that kept it burning) came from the olive tree – which again, (as oil associated with all manner of benefits to human living) is also a symbol of life. The Menorah points to the flame of the Presence of God (seven is a sacred number depicting wholeness) at the heart of life.

Your Menorah

Using the Menorah on the next page as the tree to represent the whole of your life, can you label the seven main branches as parts of your life and work.

What object from your daily life and work might you put at the top of each branch, to help you connect this aspect of your life to God and what it means to live for God?



Facilitator

Introduce the question, give the group a minute or so to think about the question for themselves. Encourage group members to share the challenges and encourage group members to work together to identify ways to grow in more wholly living.

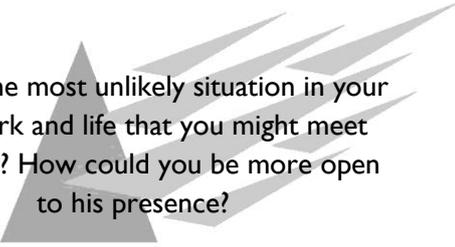
Question

As I follow Jesus on Monday, where are the biggest challenges of living beyond the sacred secular divide, and what can I do to grow into more wholly living?

Facilitator

Invite the group to consider this point for reflection during the week.

During the week you might like to reflect on:



What is the most unlikely situation in your daily work and life that you might meet with God? How could you be more open to his presence?

Facilitator

Encourage people to spend few minutes pondering on what they feel they have learned from the session.

Ponder

What did you learn from this session and what difference might this make to your discipleship?

Closing Prayer

Lord,
Whatever we build,
Give us a glimpse of glory.
Whatever we make,
Give us a sense of wonder.
Wherever we travel,
Give us a sense of reverence.
Whoever we meet,
Give us a sense of awe.
Whatever we do,
Give us a sense of achievement.
Whatever our situation,
Give us knowledge of you.
Help us to see that everything is in your care
And that you allow us to share in your glory

From 'Powerlines: Celtic Prayers About Work' by David Adam (Triangle, 1992)

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5-10 mins (10 min)	Introductions – ensure all group members know each other Distribute worksheets to all group members Introduce the topic using the topic overview
5 mins (15 min)	Activity : Sacred or Secular? Show photographs and ask for responses
10 mins (25 min)	Discussion following on from photographs and quote from 'Woodbine Willy'
10 mins (35 mins)	Discussion based around Alan Ecclestone and Teilhard de Chardin quotes
10 mins (45 mins)	Discussion based around chemical factory sunset picture
10 mins (55 mins)	Discussion based around the Dave Walker cartoon and the perspective 'Godly Work'.
20 mins (1 hour 15 mins)	Activity : Connecting with God
5 mins (1 hour 20 min)	Introduce reflection for the week, and final ponder
5 mins (1 hour 25 min)	Practicalities for next session (venue, who will lead etc.)
5 mins (1 hour 30 min)	Closing Worship

Session 3 Called to Partnership

Overview

Work is integral to who we are as human beings. Work is the means by which we express our creativity in living as disciples. It shapes our identity and it has deep impression on our psychological, social and spiritual well being. Above all then, we may say that work is fundamental because it is to do with how we collaborate with God, how we are partners with God. Work is so much more than having a paid job and it has many different forms. This unit offers an introduction to these themes and begins to explore them from the perspective of living faithfully and hopefully.

This is your worksheet; for notes, ideas and questions

Facilitator

Welcome everyone to the session. Remind people that the worksheet is for their use and notes only. Ensure introductions if there are new group members. Offer a quick overview of this session, which is the third in a series of 5.

Facilitator

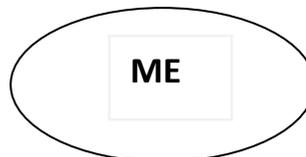
Introduce the activity 'My Work'. Invite each of the group members to map out the work that they do in all the different aspects of their life. Encourage them to think as broadly as possible about their work.

Activity

My Work – An Audit

Looking at all the different parts of your life, including your family, hobbies and interests, what kind of work do you do (paid or unpaid)?

The different kinds of work I do



Facilitator

Invite the group members to briefly share a summary of the range of the different work that they do. Highlight any aspects of work that they had previously not thought of as 'work'. This is a good opportunity for group members to find out more about each other – people may be surprised at the range of different kinds of work that people do. This is NOT a competition to see who is the busiest! There is an issue of 'breadth and depth' – some people may work across a great many different things, whereas others may work at few activities but work to a deep level.

Facilitator

Invite the group members to look at each of the different kinds of activity in their work audit, and identify what they find most fulfilling in that part of their work, and what they find most frustrating, and why.

Activity

Fulfilment and Frustration

Look back at all the different kinds of work you do. Are there any consistent themes about what you find fulfilling or frustrating?

- Facilitator** *Ask the group members to share what they find fulfilling or frustrating about different aspects of their work. Ask the group to reflect on whether there are common themes among those aspects they find fulfilling, and those they find frustrating? What sense do we make of God in both the fulfilment and in the frustration?*
- Facilitator** *Introduce the perspective 'The Glory of God'. Share this short perspective from St Irenaeus with the group, and lead a discussion about their response to this assertion.*
- Perspective** "The glory of God is a human being fully alive; and to be alive consists in beholding God."
St Irenaeus
- So, when we are most fully alive, that is when we reveal the glory of God.
- Discussion** **When we are most fully alive, that is when we reveal the glory of God. Re-visit your audit of 'what' you do. How does this idea of St Irenaeus relate to our previous discussion about fulfilment and frustration?**
- Facilitator** *It is hoped that the discussion will draw out the connections between our sense of being fully alive, and fulfilment. This has a clear connection with the ideas explored in Session 1 (FM1, Faithful Following), where we explored the quote from Barbara Brown Taylor : 'do whatever pleases you and belong to me'*
- Facilitator** *Introduce the question. In this question, we are trying to encourage everyone to see that they are creative. There is a useful background reading note on this topic which can be downloaded.*
-
- Question** **What are all the different ways in which I am creative?**
-
- Facilitator** *Draw out the group's different ideas about the ways in which they are creative. Expand people's ideas about creativity – it is much more than creating artful objects or artefacts, we also create meaning, relationships, environments etc. Encourage the group to explore how their sense of fulfilment relates to their sense of creativity.*
- Facilitator** *Introduce the perspective 'Born to Work in Partnership with God'*
- Perspective** **Born to Work in Partnership with God**
- Having been made in God's image, we are called to be God's representatives. We are God's hands and feet working in partnership with God in his world. In Genesis chapter 2 we are told that God placed Adam in the garden to till it and keep it, to cultivate it and conserve. Thus God's creative work is linked with our creativity – a creativity which designed both to preserve what God has give and to build on it through further creative ventures, using the resources God has provided. The 'tilling' suggests that we have a role [part] to play in helping prepare things so that the potential for growth which God has placed in them can be realised.

From 'Where's God on Monday?' by Alistair Mackenzie (NavPress 2002)

Facilitator

Ask the group members to share in what ways they feel they are working as partners with God. Encourage a discussion about what God's purposes are. This is seeking to bring out a range of understanding on what God's purposes are. It seems to be more helpful to talk about God's purposes than God's plan.

Question

In what ways do you or could you see yourself as working as partners with God through your work ?

During the week you might like to reflect on:



How might your work
be a blessing to others?

Facilitator

Encourage people to spend few minutes pondering on what they feel they have learned from the session.

Ponder

What did you learn from this session and what difference might this make to my discipleship?

Closing Prayer

Lord,
Whatever we build,
Give us a glimpse of glory.
Whatever we make,
Give us a sense of wonder.
Wherever we travel,
Give us a sense of reverence.
Whoever we meet,
Give us a sense of awe.
Whatever we do,
Give us a sense of achievement.
Whatever our situation,
Give us knowledge of you.
Help us to see that everything is in your care
And that you allow us to share in your glory

From 'Powerlines: Celtic Prayers About Work' by David Adam (Triangle, 1992)

SESSION OUTLINE

Think about refreshments – beginning, middle or end? We would work on the assumption that refreshments will take around 15 mins in addition to the following time framework.

The suggested timings below are based on a group of between 6 and 8 people – timings should therefore be adjusted if there are more or less in the group.

The timings given for discussion are flexible and can be reduced / extended as time allows. It is always better to ensure that there is adequate time at the end for final reflections and planning the next session, even if this means cutting discussion short.

Time for each element of the session is given, in addition to a ‘counter’ for the time taken up to that point, ending at 1 hour 30 mins.

5-10 mins (10 min)	Introductions – ensure all group members know each other Distribute worksheets to all group members Introduce the topic using the topic overview
10 mins (20 mins)	Activity : ‘My Work – An Audit’
10 mins (25 mins)	Activity : ‘Fulfilment and Frustration’
15 mins (40 mins)	Activity Part 2 – Frustrations and fulfilments
15 mins 55 minutes	Discussion based on the quote from St Iraeneus
5 mins (1 hour)	Question on our creativity
10 mins (1 hour 15 mins)	Perspective and discussion on working in partnership with God
5 mins (1 hour 20 min)	Introduce reflection for the week, and final ponder
5 mins (1 hour 25 min)	Practicalities for next session (venue, who will lead etc.)
5 mins (1 hour 30 min)	Closing Worship

Session 4 Raising our Eyes

Overview

Through our discipleship in daily life we find ourselves caught up in God's transfiguring and transforming work. We are being changed and renewed, as is the world around us. How do we perceive the world around us now? How might we look at the world differently, through the eyes of Christ? In this session, we explore habits of discipleship and reflection, which enable us to attend to the world and engage in God's transfiguring and transforming love.

This is your worksheet; for notes, ideas and questions

Facilitator

Welcome everyone to the session. Remind people that the worksheet is for their use and notes only. Ensure introductions if there are new group members. Offer a quick overview of this session, which is the fourth in a series of 5.

Facilitator

Introduce the images. Invite the group to say what they see. In the first, some may see a woman's face, others will see a man playing the saxophone. In the second, some will say a 'glass half full' or a 'glass half empty'. Open the idea that things are not always what they seem, and its possible to see things in a new way or a new light.

Question

What do you see in these pictures?



Facilitator

Introduce the activity. Ask the group to share their different viewpoints about what is going on in the picture.

Activity

How We Perceive

Take a look at these images. What do you see? What do others see? What assumptions are you making?



Facilitator

Reflecting on the different views of the images, encourage the group to think about how their assumptions have been shaped. Help the group to recognise the limitations of our experience and so think about how we work out what is the truth.

Question

What shapes our assumptions and perceptions about what is ‘true’?

Facilitator

Up to this point, we have focussed on people’s own thinking and how important it is to look at different viewpoints and to acknowledge the values that have shaped and influenced these viewpoints. As disciples we need to be aware of how we are looking at the world. Introduce the perspective ‘Transforming Theology’ which highlights the importance of this as we seek to discern and follow God’s purposes.

Perspective

Transforming Theology

“Theology has as its essential aim the transformation of the present so that it may conform to God’s hopes and yearnings for us as expressed in the teaching of Jesus about the Kingdom of God. Thus, theology helps us discern the presence of God, to learn wonderful things about that encounter, and to work with God in the transformation of ourselves and of society, as is God’s desire.”

*From ‘Let’s Do Theology: Resources for Contextual Theology’ by Laurie Green
(Mowbray, 2009)*

Facilitator

Introduce the next question. Encourage group members to share experiences from their daily work and life, of transformational moments.

Question

When you have experienced transformations and what might suggest that God was involved?

Facilitator

Ask the group to identify the characteristics that God was involved (e.g. an element of surprise, beyond normal power, a sense of grace, a sense of reconciliation or healing, something entirely new happening)

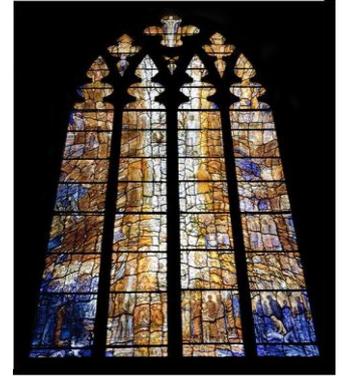
Facilitator

Introduce the bible reading and discussion. Invite someone in the group to read it aloud.

Bible Reading

The Transfiguration (Luke 9:27-36, NRSV)

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah' —not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.



*The Transfiguration Window
Durham Cathedral*

Facilitator

Encourage the group to talk about what changed for the disciples and how did they respond. See the background reading note for themes to explore in the discussion. Make the connection between the change for the disciples, and how this story might change our approach to our discipleship.

Discussion

What is significant about this story for you?

Facilitator

Group members may pick out different elements of this story as being significant. Some important parts might be that the disciples see Jesus' ministry in a wider context, of the resurrection. The holding of the past and future together, which can transfigure the present.

Facilitator

Introduce 'If only we knew how to look at life' as the commentary on The Transfiguration. Ask someone to read it aloud.

Perspective

If only we knew how to look at life by Michael Quoist

If only we knew how to look at life as God sees it, we would realise that nothing is secular in the world, but that everything contributes to the building of the kingdom of God. To have faith is only to raise one's eyes to God to contemplate him; it is also to look at this world – but with Christ's eyes. If we had allowed Christ to penetrate our whole being, if we had purified ourselves, the world would no longer be an obstacle, it would be a perpetual incentive to work for the Father in order that, in Christ, his kingdom might come on earth as it is in heaven. We must pray to have sufficient faith to know how to look at life.

From 'Prayers of Life' by Michael Quoist (Gill And Macmillan, 1965)

Facilitator *Introduce this question. Give the group a moment to think about the question, and then note any responses.*

Facilitator *Introduce the question. Encourage the group to think about times where their perceptions or assumptions were radically shifted. Continue with a discussion as to what the group member feels caused this shift. Group members may wish to just share with a neighbour, rather than the whole group - sensitivity needed.*

Question **What might be different for us if we looked at life in this way?**

Facilitator *Ask the group to share their responses. Responses from other groups have included God can be discovered in the darkness, Stop thinking in separate boxes – see Christ in everything, More conscious of working out faith, more joy in the tough side of life, being non-judgemental, dealing with issues and making a stand, Seeing fresh hope when things look desperate.*

Facilitator *Introduce perspective 'Nurturing Reflective Habits'. Here are 4 ideas that Roger Walton suggests to encourage us to be more reflective and to raise our eyes to God to contemplate him. Ask the group to comment on each of the four suggestions. Then invite the group to consider how they might apply these habits in their own lives.*

Perspective **Nurturing Reflective Habits**

Practice Attentiveness

Practising attentiveness is vital if we are to penetrate beyond surface meanings. Attentiveness can be nurtured through simple observation of what goes on. Like pressing pause on a DVD and looking at the still picture. What you had not noticed before is now more obvious, the emotion of the character is more amplified or the absence of music gives a different feel to the story.

Practice Making Connections

The juxtaposing of one thing with another is part of reflection. In faithful reflection it is to do with setting the scriptures and tradition alongside one's life events and allowing them to speak to each other.

Practice Partnered Conversations

Partnered (or group) conversations are an opportunity to rehearse connections you have made and develop attentiveness to others. The rule is to take time to talk about God.

Practice prayerful expression and practical enactment

Reflection without some kind of outcome is not really faithful reflection. It may however, not always be an observable behaviour change. Through reflection you have seen a gospel truth and recognised it in your own life. This is a precious discovery and something to celebrate. Prayerful expressions of thanksgiving can be a regular part of reflective discipleship. Prayerful expression is no substitute for taking action however. When you have a new insight you should ask yourself: What small change would begin to express this in my home or work or church?

*From 'The Reflective Disciple' by Roger Walton
(Epworth, 2009)*

Question

How might you practice these 4 habits in your own daily life ?

Facilitator

Draw the session to a conclusion by encouraging the group to see the importance of working together to explore real issues, share different viewpoints, understand how scripture and tradition might allow God to speak into a situation, and most importantly to enable people to work as partners in God's transforming action. This is a key discipline of discipleship in everyday life, and needs to be practiced in Christian communities.

Facilitator

Introduce the final reflection

During the week you might like to reflect on:



What changes when you look at one part of your daily life with 'Christ's eyes'?

Facilitator

Encourage people to spend few minutes pondering on what they feel they have learned from the session.

Ponder

What did you learn from this session and what difference might it make to your discipleship?

Closing Prayer

Lord,
Whatever we build,
Give us a glimpse of glory.
Whatever we make,
Give us a sense of wonder.
Wherever we travel,
Give us a sense of reverence.
Whoever we meet,
Give us a sense of awe.
Whatever we do,
Give us a sense of achievement.
Whatever our situation,
Give us knowledge of you.
Help us to see that everything is in your care
And that you allow us to share in your glory

From 'Powerlines: Celtic Prayers About Work' by David Adam (Triangle, 1992)

SESSION OUTLINE

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5-10 mins (10 min)	Introductions – ensure all group members know each other Distribute worksheets to all group members Introduce the topic using the topic overview
15 mins (25 mins)	Question – what do you see in this picture? Activity – what do you see in these pictures? Question – What shapes our assumptions and perceptions about what is ‘true’?
5 mins (30 mins)	Discussion based on ‘Transforming Theology’
10 mins (40 mins)	Question – when you have experience transformations, what might suggest that God was involved?
15 mins (55 mins)	The Transfiguration – bible reading and questions
10 mins (1 hour 5 mins)	‘If only we knew how to look at life’ poem, and question – what might be different if we looked at life in this way?
10 mins (1 hour 15 mins)	‘Nurturing Reflective Habits’ perspective and question – how might you practice these habits in your daily life?
5 mins (1 hour 20 min)	Introduce reflection for the week, and final ponder
5 mins (1 hour 25 min)	Practicalities for next session (venue, who will lead etc.)
5 mins (1 hour 30 min)	Closing Worship

Session 5 Go in Peace

Overview

Discipleship is personal but not individualistic. At our baptism we become part of the Church. We are commissioned to shine as lights in the world to the glory of God, and our journey of discipleship begins. How do we understand what it means to belong to and be part of the Church, and to keep focussed on the hope that we have in Jesus Christ in everyday situations? This session explores what we mean by 'church' and how we live as the church in the world.

This is your worksheet; for notes, ideas and questions

Facilitator

Welcome everyone to the session. Remind people that the worksheet is for their use and notes only. Ensure introductions if there are new group members. Offer a quick overview of this session, which is the final session in a series of 5.

Facilitator

Introduce the activity. Give each member of the group 4 or 5 post-it notes or slips of paper. Ask them to write one response to the question on each.

Activity

What does 'The Church' mean to you?

Write your responses on individual post it notes or slips of paper

Facilitator

Ask group members to share a response in turn, placing their piece of paper in the centre. Continue to go round the group until all responses have been shared. These will be used later, once the next perspective has been introduced.

Facilitator

Introduce the perspective 'Gathered and Dispersed Church'.

Perspective

Gathered and Dispersed Church

The church is most generally recognised in its Gathered Form. Here the people of God come together for worship, learning and fellowship. They come together at specific times and in specific places, in large or small groups. As a Gathered Church, people readily identify themselves as part of a community of faith. In this context people talk about 'going' to church.



The church also exists in its Dispersed form. Here, the people of God are engaged in daily living, that is 'being' church in the world.

They may or may not be consciously alongside other Christians but are working out what their faith means in the places where they find themselves. Helpful images for the church in its Dispersed form are gathered around light, salt or yeast (all from parables of Jesus): invisible, but having a profound effect on the flavour and life of the world.



Facilitator

Ask the group to sort their responses from the first activity ('What does 'The Church' mean to you?') into those which relate the church in its gathered form, those which relate to the church in its dispersed form, or somewhere in between. You may need to probe what people's intention was when they wrote a certain response (e.g. 'Sharing the love of God', 'The Body of Christ') by asking 'Do you see this as being more expressed in the gathered form or dispersed form, or equally in both?')

Facilitator

Introduce the perspective from Rick Brewer, and ask the group to think about examples of how these ideas might apply in their own situation

Perspective

Living as the Dispersed Church

"A report was requested, framed by several "church gathered" questions. I decided to answer them using a two column chart. One column is titled "Church Gathered" while the other is "Church Dispersed." I then used the two church forms as lens to focus the questions. For example, the first question asks "since the last report, how has the spirit/life of the congregation changed?" I answered the question under the "Gathered" side which produced stock answers with churchy language. When I moved the question to the "Church Dispersed," I first noticed that I needed to radically reinterpret the data. To illustrate, under the Gathered column I noted that we had three leaders facing significant medical diagnostic tests. That prompted comments about pastoral concerns and support.

When I took that data and view it through the Dispersed lens, I awakened to the fact that three committed Christians were frequenting medical facilities. While I do not yet have ways of knowing much about their experiences, the Dispersed Lens brought better questions into focus: "how does our liturgy help people "be" the church as a patient undergoing tests? How to they encounter Christ in such circumstance? What would help them be a point of God's presence, even in their illnesses? Perhaps other questions will arise.

For now, I realized that merely using the Church Dispersed frame brought a fresh standpoint from which to view the situation."

Rick Brewer

Facilitator

Ask the group to think about how focusing on the dispersed life of the church could help re-energise the gathered life of the church.

Facilitator

Introduce the discussion. Encourage the group to think about the images of salt, light and yeast and how they have seen these images in their own discipleship.

Question **Can you think of a story from your own discipleship that would illustrate salt, light or yeast?**

Facilitator *Encourage the group to tell their stories about ways in which they have found these images useful.*

Facilitator *Introduce the perspective 'Whose Mission?' Invite the group to comment on how they feel about this statement and what its implications are for how we think about the church.*

Perspective **Whose Mission?**
 God's church falters from exhaustion because Christians erroneously think that God has given them a mission to perform in the world. Rather, the God of mission has given his church to the world. It is not the church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of mission who has a church in the world.

*Beyond Duty: A Passion for Christ, a Heart for Mission by Tim Dearborn
 (Marc Publishing, 1998)*

Discussion **What would be different for the church if we focussed on God's mission?**

Facilitator *Draw out any general points from the discussion. Introduce the 5 Marks of Mission. Many people will be familiar with these. For more detailed reading about the 5 Marks of Mission, please see*

Perspective **5 Marks of Mission**

The Anglican Church has identified 5 'Marks' of mission, which should characterise the life every 'church', local, national, denominational and global.

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

*These Five Marks of Mission were first set out in Bonds of Affection
 1984 ACC-6 p49 and later in Mission in a Broken World - 1990 ACC-8 p101*

Facilitator *Where is the source of energy in the church. How do we best tap into the energy of the dispersed church. How might it be if our gathering was more obviously drawing on the energy for life that arose from our encounter with God in the daily work and life.*

Question **How does our experience of working with God through these 5 Marks of Mission, bring energy and hope back into the gathered church?**

Facilitator

Ask the group to read through the perspective 'The Ground of our Hope' and see how this compares with the previous discussion. The group may disagree with the style here, but the principal focus is on the verse from 1 Peter at the end of the passage.

Perspective

The Ground of our Hope

You must realise that perhaps the most important moment in the worship service is the moment in which you leave the church (*building*). Then it is decided whether you have understood why you spent that hour behind those walls. Do you realise that even when you were outside the walls of the church you never the less do not cease to be a congregation. Your Christian service begins quite modestly with listening to the questions of others, talking them over and holding your peace. They all have questions, the neighbour and the colleague at work, the head of a firm and the employee, the merchant, the public official, the farmer, the union official and the politician, the Marxist and the atheist. Whether or not they address their questions to us depends on whether we take them seriously with their problems, or whether we merely push our own questions and answers in front of us like a bulldozer that levels everything to 'Christian dimensions'. We should allow their questions to confront us, and listen attentively to them. Our answers must have a solid foundation and must never be proposed on the basis of presumption or superficial views. The New Testament admonishes us ;

"Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you concerning the ground of the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15)

*From 'The Christian Witness in an Industrial Society' by Horst Symanowski
(Collins, 1964)*

Facilitator

Introduce the question. Use this question as a way to encourage group members to draw together some of their learning over the 5 session of this course. Remind them of some of the major learning points from the previous 4 sessions. Which of the 4 previous sessions might form the 'ground of your hope' from this point on? How does it affirm a ground of hope for you?

Question

Based on the ground of hope quotation, what have the previous 4 sessions given you as a ground of hope?

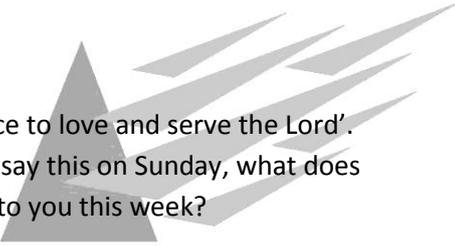
Facilitator

Introduce the final discussion to think about ways in which the church in its dispersed form could be supported and encouraged by the church in its gathered form (e.g. how we pray for each other, the groups that we belong to, opportunities to talk about our experiences etc.)

Discussion

As we return to Sunday, how best could we encourage and support each other in the challenges of living our daily lives as disciples of Christ?

During the week you might like to reflect on:



'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord'.
When you say this on Sunday, what does
this mean to you this week?

Facilitator *Encourage people to spend few minutes pondering on what they feel they have learned from the session.*

Ponder **What did you learn from this session and what difference might it make to your discipleship?**

Closing Prayer

Lord,
Whatever we build,
Give us a glimpse of glory.
Whatever we make,
Give us a sense of wonder.
Wherever we travel,
Give us a sense of reverence.
Whoever we meet,
Give us a sense of awe.
Whatever we do,
Give us a sense of achievement.
Whatever our situation,
Give us knowledge of you.
Help us to see that everything is in your care
And that you allow us to share in your glory

From 'Powerlines: Celtic Prayers About Work' by David Adam (Triangle, 1992)

SESSION OUTLINE

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15 mins (25 mins)	Question – What does the church mean to you Perspective – Gathered and Dispersed Sorting responses
5 mins (30 mins)	Discussion of images of the church in dispersed form (salt, light, yeast)
10 mins (40 mins)	Discussion based on the perspective 'Whose Mission?' - the relationship between God, the church and the world
15 mins (55 mins)	Discussion based on the perspective 'The 5 Marks of Mission' – different stories
10 mins (1 hour 5 mins)	Question based on the perspective 'The Ground of our Hope' - As we follow Jesus on Monday, what would you say the 'ground of your hope' is?
10 mins (1 hour 15 mins)	Discussion : As we return to Sunday....
5 mins (1 hour 20 min)	Introduce reflection for the week, and final ponder
5 mins (1 hour 25 min)	Practicalities for next session (venue, who will lead etc.)
5 mins (1 hour 30 min)	Closing Worship