

CAPACITY

HOMECELL LEADER DEVELOPMENT COURSE **SESSION THREE**

'FOLLOW-UPS', THE 'FIGHT' FOR SOULS AND THE POWER OF A PERSONAL VISIT

Making disciples: God's 'work' vs Our 'work'

Jesus showed us a clear example in the Bible of the 'process' of salvation and leading a person into NEW life, i.e. discipleship. When we read the story of the resurrection of Lazarus, it becomes clear that there is still work to be done after a person has been brought back to life/been risen to life in Christ.

Jesus invites us into a partnership to lead others into true life with Him.

Let's read the story of Lazarus in John 11:

John 11:39-44 Amplified Bible

Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be an offensive odour, for he has been dead four days! [It is hopeless!]" Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe [in Me], you will see the glory of God [the expression of His excellence]?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised His eyes [toward heaven] and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. I knew that You always hear Me and listen to Me; but I have said this because of the people standing around, so that they may believe that You have sent Me [and that You have made Me Your representative]." When He had said this, He shouted with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" Out came the man who had been dead, his hands and feet tightly wrapped in burial cloths (linen strips), and with a [burial] cloth wrapped around his face. Jesus said to them, "Unwrap him and release him."

- The resurrection (spiritually-speaking, the salvation) of Lazarus, was the 'work' of God, BUT the unwrapping and releasing of the man is the 'work' of those around the man who already had life!

- Salvation is a work of God, but discipleship is OUR WORK!
- THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT TO NOTE HERE, IS THAT THE REAL WORK STARTS AFTER THE MAN'S SALVATION!! (For many of us, we think the work is done when someone prays the salvation prayer, but that is when the real work of fighting for the soul of a person and discipleship really starts.

Making disciples: The FIGHT for Souls & The Importance of Following Up Salvations and Visitors

It is a FIGHT to possess the Kingdom and to help others do so. Satan, the real enemy to our souls, is always violently attacking the Kingdom of God, and we need to be MORE zealous to DE-POSSESS him!!

Matthew 11:12 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition

And from the days of John the Baptist until the present time, the kingdom of heaven has endured violent assault, and violent men seize it by force [as a precious prize—a share in the heavenly kingdom is sought with most ardent zeal and intense exertion].

We need to be completely AWARE and ALERT about what will happen to a person who has received the message of salvation, and play our part in being God's vessels to follow up and FIGHT for the souls of people!

The follow-up process that we apply to any person who has visited our homecell or a church service, and especially someone who has prayed the salvation prayer is absolutely pivotal to their growth process.

Matthew 13:18-23 Amplified Bible The Parable of the Sower Explained

“Listen then to the [meaning of the] parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom [regarding salvation] and does not understand and grasp it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. The one on whom seed was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and at once welcomes it with joy; yet he has no [substantial] root in himself, but is only temporary, and when pressure or persecution comes because of the word, immediately he stumbles and falls away [abandoning the One who is the source of salvation]. And the one on whom seed was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the worries and distractions of the world and the deceitfulness [the superficial pleasures and delight] of riches choke the word, and it yields no

fruit. And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands and grasps it; he indeed bears fruit and yields, some a hundred times [as much as was sown], some sixty [times as much], and some thirty."

Making disciples: The POWER of a Personal Visit

- It is so important that we realise the power that we have in taking/carrying Jesus to those who are lost, by personally visiting them.
- We, born-again children of God, are all carriers of the Presence of God, and where we go, there He goes.
- We carry around in us power and anointing in the form of the Holy Spirit, to truly touch the lives of people with the love and goodness of God.
- It is especially important that we focus on visiting those who have once come to a homecell or church meeting, and those who have responded to an altar call/an invitation to receive Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

STUDY STATS *FINDINGS FROM A STUDY OF THE 8 MOST PROMINENT CELL BASED CHURCHES IN THE WORLD (BY JOEL COMISKEY)

**The study shows that the amount of visitors, though important, is secondary to visitations of new people, which shows a direct correlation between visitations of new visitors and the amount of times the homecell multiplies.*

Herb Miller in his book 'Magnetic Church' concludes that no other single factor makes a greater difference in membership addition than an immediate visit to the home of first-time worshippers. . . . When lay persons make fifteen-minute visits to the homes of first-time worship visitors within thirty-six hours, 85 percent of them return the following week. Make this home visit within seventy-two hours, and 60 percent of them return. Make it seven days later, and 15 percent will return. **The pastor making this visit, rather than lay persons, cuts each result in half!!!*

THE POWERFUL 'HOME VISITS' OF JESUS!

A huge part of the ministry of Jesus took part in the homes of people He visited! We can learn so much from His example!

Jesus often taught His disciples in their homes - Mark 7:17-18, 9:33, 10:10, He instituted the Lord's supper in a home - Matt 26:18, He sent His twelve, and then 70 other disciples out to minister to people in homes from village to village - Luke 9&10.

Some other examples of Jesus' 'home visits':

Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law

Matthew 8:14-15 New King James Version

Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed

Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.

Jesus reaches out to Matthew's sinner friends

Matthew 9:9-13 New Living Translation

Jesus Calls Matthew

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him. Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such scum?"

When Jesus heard this, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do." Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.' For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."

Jesus seeks and saves the lost in Zaccheus's house

Luke 19:1-10 New International Version

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this

man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Jesus visits and disciples Mary and Martha

Luke 10:38-42 Amplified Bible

Martha and Mary

Now while they were on their way, Jesus entered a village [called Bethany], and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who seated herself at the Lord's feet and was continually listening to His teaching. But Martha was very busy and distracted with all of her serving responsibilities; and she approached Him and said, "Lord, is it of no concern to You that my sister has left me to do the serving alone? Tell her to help me and do her part." But the Lord replied to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered and anxious about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part [that which is to her advantage], which will not be taken away from her."

Jesus heals Jairus's daughter at his house

Mark 5:35-42 Living Bible

While he was still talking to her, messengers arrived from Jairus's home with the news that it was too late—his daughter was dead and there was no point in Jesus' coming now. But Jesus ignored their comments and said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid. Just trust me." Then Jesus halted the crowd and wouldn't let anyone go on with him to Jairus's home except Peter and James and John. When they arrived, Jesus saw that all was in great confusion, with unrestrained weeping and wailing. He went inside and spoke to the people. "Why all this weeping and commotion?" he asked. "The child isn't dead; she is only asleep!" They laughed at him in bitter derision, but he told them all to leave, and taking the little girl's father and mother and his three disciples, he went into the room where she was lying. Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Get up, little girl!" (She was twelve years old.) And she jumped up and walked around! Her parents just couldn't get over it.

Jesus eats with Simon, the Leper, in his house

Matthew 26:6-13 Living Bible

Jesus now proceeded to Bethany, to the home of Simon the leper. While he was eating, a woman came in with a bottle of very expensive perfume and poured it over his head. The disciples were indignant. "What a waste of

good money," they said. "Why, she could have sold it for a fortune and given it to the poor." Jesus knew what they were thinking and said, "Why are you criticising her? For she has done a good thing to me. You will always have the poor among you, but you won't always have me. She has poured this perfume on me to prepare my body for burial. And she will always be remembered for this deed. The story of what she has done will be told throughout the whole world, wherever the Good News is preached."

Jesus heals a paraplegic in a house where He is teaching

Luke 5:19-26 The Message

Some men arrived carrying a paraplegic on a stretcher. They were looking for a way to get into the house and set him before Jesus. When they couldn't find a way in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof, removed some tiles, and let him down in the middle of everyone, right in front of Jesus. Impressed by their bold belief, he said, "Friend, I forgive your sins." That set the religion scholars and Pharisees buzzing. "Who does he think he is? That's blasphemous talk! God and only God can forgive sins." Jesus knew exactly what they were thinking and said, "Why all this gossipy whispering? Which is simpler: to say 'I forgive your sins,' or to say 'Get up and start walking'? Well, just so it's clear that I'm the Son of Man and authorised to do either, or both. . . ." He now spoke directly to the paraplegic: "Get up. Take your bedroll and go home." Without a moment's hesitation, he did it—got up, took his blanket, and left for home, giving glory to God all the way. The people rubbed their eyes, stunned—and then also gave glory to God. Awestruck, they said, "We've never seen anything like that!"

Jesus visits a Pharisee

Luke 14:1-6 The Message

One time when Jesus went for a Sabbath meal with one of the top leaders of the Pharisees, all the guests had their eyes on him, watching his every move. Right before him there was a man hugely swollen in his joints. So Jesus asked the religion scholars and Pharisees present, "Is it permitted to heal on the Sabbath? Yes or no?" They were silent. So he took the man, healed him, and sent him on his way. Then he said, "Is there anyone here who, if a child or animal fell down a well, wouldn't rush to pull him out immediately, not asking whether or not it was the Sabbath?" They were stumped. There was nothing they could say to that.

10 POWERFUL TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE PERSONAL VISIT

Imagine if every follower of Christ was to follow His example, and carry the Presence of God into the homes and lives of everyone we know - how we would turn the world upside down for Jesus!!

TIP 1: KNOW THAT YOU ARE 'GOING' IN GOD'S AUTHORITY

- You have power to make a difference as you go out to take the Presence of God to the person you are visiting.
- (You are not going under CRC or your pastor's authority, but with authority vested in you by Jesus!)
- All authority (to make disciples) has been given to you by Jesus - you go in His name AND He is with you!

Matthew 28:18-20 The Passion Translation (TPT)

Then Jesus came close to them and said, "All the authority of the universe has been given to me. Now go in my authority and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And teach them to faithfully follow all that I have commanded you. And never forget that I am with you every day, even to the completion of this age."

TIP 2: THERE IS POWER IN GOING IN PAIRS

- Always go on a personal visit in pairs, i.e. 2x2.
- You can read in the gospels (Mark 6 and Luke 10) that Jesus always sent His disciples out amongst the lost people in pairs - He sent them out 2 by 2.

Mark 6:7 New Living Translation (NLT)

And he called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits.

Why in pairs?

- 2 is better/stronger than 1, and 3 is even better! So you, a team mate and the Holy Spirit are a powerful team!
- Where 2 of you agree, there is power (Matt 18:19)
- 1 sets 1000 enemies to flight but 2 sets 10000 to flight - exponential power becomes available where we pair up
- 2 can support each other, give each other confidence, shine a brighter light and also protect each other
- Where there is 2, it means there is training/discipleship taking place!

TIP 3: PRAYER IS POWERFUL, SO PRAY!

- Praying before you visit someone you are reaching reminds you that you are not going in your own strength but in His power! You also allow the Holy Spirit to prepare the heart of the person you are visiting.
- Prayer is a way to take authority over the things holding the person that you will visit back & you will also give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to lead you in the right things to say or do - He knows where the person is at!
- Also, your expectation is God's invitation - pray out your expectations of the visit to God, and then allow Him to move in the meeting.
- When the 2 of you going on the visit agree together **in prayer**, it releases much power:

Matthew 18:19 New International Version (NIV)

"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.

- **Pray for the person at the end of the visit** - ask them if you may pray for them, and even if you may lay hands on them, and pray God's blessing over them in a spirit-led way - this prayer will certainly open their hearts to God!

TIP 4: BE WISE - UNDERSTAND YOUR MISSION

- Remember you are sent on a mission by God Himself - you are not just on a random visit! You have to go with a mission to accomplish something, whether it is to lead someone to Christ, to convince them to be baptised, to encourage them to plant themselves or to be involved in the purposes of the Kingdom, etc.
- The person you visit may not know or understand your mission, because you act wisely and gently, but you need to be ON A MISSION in your inner man, and you will do anything to reach your goal to connect the person! Keep on steering the conversation towards a point where you know God wants to work!

Matthew 10:16 The Passion Translation (TPT)

Now, remember, it is I who sends you out, even though you feel vulnerable as lambs going into a pack of wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes yet as harmless as doves."

TIP 5: EVERY CONVERSATION MUST LEAD TO A DECISION

- A conversation on a personal visit must ALWAYS lead to a decision - to accept Christ, to be baptised, to be planted, to repent of backsliding, to be involved in church, to give etc. (Think about a Sunday service - how many people will get saved if we don't challenge them to a decision? Zero!)
- In the same way, your conversation must end with an opportunity for a person to choose/decide to take the next step!!

2 Corinthians 7:10 New Living Translation (NLT)

For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

TIP 6: THERE IS POWER IN UNDERSTANDING & BEING ABLE TO EXPLAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS TO SOMEONE

- Hebrews 6 teaches us that it is an absolutely basic/foundational thing for us to be able to explain righteousness.
- Equip yourself to understand righteousness - make your own study of repentance, baptism, the Holy Spirit - most questions/discussions lead there and most questions can be answered by the principles of righteousness!

TIP 7: DON'T BE AFRAID

- Don't be afraid of persecution, rejection or confrontation!
- Remember, when we are in the gap to mediate on behalf of God between Him and a person, we are standing between spiritual death and spiritual life, literally between life and death - there is bound to be conflict in the spiritual realm!
- But you are just the vessel, so do not take it personal!
- Stay respectful but firm on truth at all times!

Luke 10:16

Then he said to the disciples, "Anyone who accepts your message is also accepting me. And anyone who rejects you is rejecting me. And anyone who rejects me is rejecting God, who sent me."

TIP 8: STAY IN TOUCH REGULARLY

- Stay in touch afterwards - this is the way to water the seeds you have sown and to keep the connection alive.
- Send a thank you text message afterwards and even follow up your visit with a gift etc.
- It is also very important to follow up on the decision that the person made during the visit - we need to help them to keep to it!
- People do not care how much you know, until they know how much you care.
- Keep in touch even if they do not respond - remember the devil is always out to steal seed.

TIP 9: BE SENSITIVE TO THE ENVIRONMENT WHERE THE VISIT IS TAKING PLACE

- Some people may not be willing to open their house to you for a visit, and that is okay. Try to meet in a coffee shop or environment where you will not be disturbed, i.e. music not too loud etc & so you can speak freely to the person about what is on your heart.
- You have to be able to have a heart to heart conversation - be sensitive to your environment - the devil will try to arrange distractions!

TIP 10: BE ACCOUNTABLE - IT IS A KEY FACTOR FOR GROWTH

- Give account of your visit to a leader - it will cause growth to you and the person you visited!
- Accountability is a key factor for growth - and by being accountable we can both celebrate what has been accomplished and assess how we need to proceed to help the person further in their journey with the Lord.
- We can also identify areas of need for training/discipleship i.e. if you report back your leader might be able to identify that you need more training in a certain area.
- A leader can always give you general feedback that will help you grow, like the disciples who learned what was the most important thing!

Luke 10:17-20 New International Version (NIV)

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

HOMEWORK/SELF-STUDY

THE POWER OF A PERSONAL VISIT

1. Pair up with another Homecell member and visit a person who has visited your homecell or a church service before but has not connected fully to Jesus and the church yet.
 - a. Apply the 10 tips for an effective personal visit to lead the person to the next step to bring them closer to Jesus, and then give feedback to your Pastor of how it went!

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