

# What about Prophecy? – part one

## 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

### Welcome (10 mins)

What do you feel was the best gift you have ever received?

### Worship (10 mins)

CONSIDER - we worship the all-powerful Almighty God, Creator of the heavens and the earth, yet in Jesus we see the most extraordinary humility. When we exercise the spiritual gifts God has given us, we do so for His glory alone. Worship is the same - we bow down low and lift Him high, we decrease so that He will increase. Here's a beautiful song written by a fellow South African about our humble king Jesus. Commit yourself once again to following His example as you sing or listen.

SING - The Humble King

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

### Word (30 mins)

#### Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

- What was life like when you first began to believe that "Jesus is Lord?"
- Verses 4-6 indicate that some of the Corinthians felt certain spiritual gifts were better than others. Have you ever encountered a similar attitude? In yourself?
- Of the gifts listed, which ones do you think you've received? Which ones would you like to ask for?
- From Paul's rhetorical questions in verse 29-30, what can we identify as another problem in this church? How do you think we can protect ourselves from this becoming a problem in our church family?

- Take some time affirming the gifts you see in one another in your small group, how have you seen the character of Jesus in them?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

Verse 7 says that a spiritual gift is given **to each of us**, so that we can **help each other**, for the **common good**.

Perhaps we need to let go of scepticism, or a feeling of *'it's not for me, but for others who are more spiritual than me'*, or a feeling they're a bit weird!

One person in the group can say a prayer asking God to change what we think about spiritual gifts, that we could let go resistance or disinterest and begin to know and experience what they're all about, so that we can help each other.

They are a **gift**, a free gift! God wants you to know what your gift is. Share in pairs - if you don't know what your gift is, pray that God will show you what it is (don't feel awkward, we don't necessarily know automatically what our gifts are. Often others recognise them in us, before we do!) - If you know what your gift is, thank God for it, and ask the Holy Spirit to enable you to use it more effectively.

### Witness (5-10 mins)

What gifts should our church excel in as we consider welcoming newcomers into our church?

# What about Prophecy? – part two

Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-25

## Welcome (10 mins)

Have you ever tried to learn to speak a foreign language? How did it initially sound, strange or interesting?

## Worship (10 mins)

**SPEAK** - Read Psalm 27 aloud. Take it in turns to read one verse after the other, or have the leader read the odd verses with the rest of the group reading the even ones. However you do it, when you reach the last verse (14), repeat it together a few times. Consider the words. Speak them as a prayer over your time together. Let them sink in. Then sing this song of invitation to the Holy Spirit...

**SING** - Fullness by Elevation Worship

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key - C)

or [here](#) (lower key - G)

## Word (30 mins)

### Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-25

1. Describe a time when you were in another area or country and you couldn't speak the language. Was it funny? Frustrating? Humbling?
2. What is the difference between speaking in tongues and prophesying? (vv. 2-4)
3. How does Paul "correct" those who are spiritually proud? (v. 12)
4. How does the gift of tongues edify an individual? What do you do that edifies you alone? What do you do that edifies others in the church?
5. What exciting experiences would you love to have in your Christian life?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Last week we heard that prophecy is to help us, for the common good.(12:7) This week v22 says it's for the benefit of believers. Have you ever had a word or prophecy? Did you find it helpful? Go around the group and share.

Take a piece of paper. Let your host allocate you 2 names in the group. Be quiet for 2 minutes - host please time! Ask God to speak to you about these 2 people. You may 'hear' nothing at all. Don't panic. But you might get a fleeting impression - a picture, or a sense of something, or a verse might pop into your mind. Just write down what you hear or sense. Don't feel at all awkward if you hear nothing at all, or if you see a picture that seems silly. Just write it down. Then share with one another. (Hearing God can take a bit of practise! Like starting playball and then progressing onto cricket!)

## Witness (5-10 mins)

In light of Paul's desire that unbelievers exclaim *God is really among you*, how do we understand vs 22-25?

Another way to enjoy God's presence among us is to enjoy his creation together. This is Season of Creation month. Why not invite a friend or newcomer for a braai/picnic/walk/hike in one of the beautiful places that in CT on Heritage Day (September 24th). Who knows what conversations God will spark! Email [yvonne@cck.org.za](mailto:yvonne@cck.org.za) if you like this idea and need some names of newcomers.

# What about creation?

Read Genesis 1:1-31

## Welcome (10 mins)

Have you ever "created" something...  
A clay object, a sculpture, a painting or a drawing? How did it make you feel? Good, proud, possessive, accomplished?

## Worship (10 mins)

**READ & LIGHT** - This will work best if you begin in darkness, but that isn't essential. Divide these 6 lines from today's worship song about creation among your group (if you have less than 6 people, give each person more than one line). Take turns to slowly read a line, lighting your candle as you say "so will I". Once all the candles are lit, read the lines again together as a group.

- *If the stars were made to worship so will I*
- *If the mountains bow in rev'rence so will I*
- *If the oceans roar Your greatness so will I*
- *For if ev'rything exists to lift You high so will I*
- *If the wind goes where You send it so will I*
- *If the rocks cry out in silence so will I*

**SING** - So Will I (100 Billion X) by Hillsong Worship

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key - D)

or [here](#) (lower key - C)

## Word (30 mins)

Read Genesis 1:1-31

1. What do the opening verses of this chapter tell us about the order of creation? Its author? The purpose of creation? The climax? The goodness?

2. When you read the story of creation, what is your first impression of God?
3. Why do you think God first *forms* the world (days 1-3) and then *fills* that world (days 4-6) ?
4. What is the role of human beings in creation? What does that mean for our role now on the earth?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

What is the most wonderful thing you've ever seen in nature? How did it speak to you of God? Thank him.

Creativity is one of God's greatest gifts, mirroring God's nature. Share in pairs, praying that God will reveal new ways to you to be creative in your life, to grow in what you already do, or how to be defending our environment.

## Witness (5-10 mins)

This month we are participating with the global church in Season of Creation. Peter Houston preached at all three services on Sunday on *what about Creation*. Share with the group any particular points that have stayed with you.

Wednesdays 21st September Climate Scientist and CCK member, Peter Johnston, will be hosting a zoom talk titled *And God said 'Let there be climate change'*. Do join in, in what will be fascinating and informative presentation and discussion. [Here](#) is the link for the 7.30pm start.

# What about Sabbath?

Read Genesis 2:1-3 & Deuteronomy 5:12-15

## Welcome (10 mins)

What do you do to relax?

## Worship (10 mins)

PAUSE - In the next section, you'll have the chance to plan some time to rest in the week ahead. For now, let's practice one way to do that - stillness. Get comfortable, and spend two minutes in silence, concentrating God's presence. Rest in Him, draw strength and courage from Him. Let the peace of God guard your heart and mind (Philippians 4:7). Don't worry about odd thoughts or distractions - as they happen, notice them, let them go, and return to your focus. Then sing this song, reminding us of the grace, strength, and security we find in God when we truly rest in Him.

SING - I Will Rest by Northpoint Worship

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key - E) or [here](#) (lower key - C)

## Word (30 mins)

Read Genesis 2:1-3 & Deuteronomy 5:12-15

1. Why do you think God rested on the 7th day? (Gen 2: 1-3)
2. In Deuteronomy 5: 12-15 God gives the people strict instructions on how to observe the Sabbath, Why do you think God is so specific?
3. If you were to translate Deuteronomy 5: 12-15 into our current modern context, what do you think it would say?
4. How is God asking us to obey the Sabbath today?
5. What are some practical ideas you have for obeying the Sabbath in your own life?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Verse 7 says that a spiritual gift is given **to each of us**, so that we can **help each other**, for the **common good**. Perhaps we need to let go of scepticism, or a feeling of *'it's not for me, but for others who are more spiritual than me'*, or a feeling they're a bit weird! Perhaps one person in the group can say a prayer asking God to change what we think about spiritual gifts, that we could let go resistance or disinterest and begin to know and experience what they're all about, so that we can help each other.

They are a **gift**, a free gift! God wants you to know what your gift is. Share in pairs - if you don't know what your gift is, pray that God will show you what it is (don't feel awkward, we don't necessarily know automatically what our gifts are. Often others recognise them in us, before we do!)

*- If you know what your gift is, thank God for it, and ask the Holy Spirit to enable you to use it more effectively.*

## Witness (5-10 mins)

What gifts should our church excel in as newcomers come into our church?

What is our calling in this regard, even if we don't consider it to be our particular gift?

# What about disappointments and doubts in God?

Read Jeremiah 20: 1-18

## Welcome (10 mins)

Share a memory from your childhood that was profoundly memorable; happy-making or painful and how it impacted your adulthood?

## Worship (10 mins)

Take any cross section of worship songs sung in churches today and you'll most likely find that the majority are joyful, triumphant, and full of hope. This is right and good, but there are some equally deep worship songs written in a very different way. Songs that are, literally or metaphorically, in a minor key. Tim Hughes had this to say about writing today's song: *"The song was birthed out of a hard time I was going through. One evening I sat with my guitar and poured out my heart to God. I found great hope and strength being able to express my pain, and in the midst of the doubt singing, 'I will praise You, I will praise You. When the tears fall still I will sing to You.' Initially, I thought it wasn't a song that could be sung in a Church context. However, as I read through the Psalms, I discovered many cries of worship that came from a place of brokenness. Life is full of pain and sorrow. Loved ones die, dreams fail, people get hurt – we are left with unanswered questions. That's the reality of the world we live in. Yet in the midst of the pain, through the tears God is good. He is and always will be worthy of our praise."* – Tim Hughes

SING - When The Tears Fall

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

## Word (30 mins)

1. Jeremiah's cracked pot lands him in what kind of trouble? (Verse 1-2) How does he react towards his superior? (v. 3-6)
2. What happens to Jeremiah the day he is confined to prison? (Verse 2-3, 7-10) what blame does he dare shift to God? (Verse 8)

What do you think is more important to him at this point; personal bitterness or divine compulsion?

3. What totally opposing emotions take turns gripping him? (Verse 13-18) which feeling do you think is the overriding feeling at this time?
4. Why doesn't God answer his outburst? Has God been consoling to him in the past?
5. Is your way of handling anger and depression anything like Jeremiah's? Have you ever wished you were never born? Do you keep violence inside or let it out? How often do you ride an emotional rollercoaster?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Recently a man shared a testimony in church at the 11am - he was unfairly dismissed, and was full of anger and hurt, to the point where all he wanted was revenge, which consumed him for months. However, in his pain and anger he eventually cried out to God. When he did so, he was able to let go his bitterness and the situation was resolved in a most remarkable way.

Jeremiah expresses his anger towards God. He's one of God's most powerful prophets - yet he wishes he'd never been born! But at the same time he praises God, saying 'you're on my side, you've rescued me, praise you Lord.' Have you been, or are you in this place? Are you brave enough to tell God how you feel, to express your disappointment or your anger towards him? Can you praise God despite all? Be still for a minute and reflect on this paradox of anger versus praise.

## Witness (5-10 mins)

Considering this study and our witness as Christians, discuss Father Walter Adams (1869 – 1952) emphasis on the 'three patiences' – patience with God, patience with my neighbour and patience with oneself.

# What about when Homelessness knocks on your door?

Read Isaiah 61: 1-10

## Welcome (10 mins)

How do you manage interruptions in your life - Just as you've sat down to answer an email, watch a series, hang up the washing, the phone rings, the doorbell rings, your child/partner/the dog needs you - what do you feel, say and do?

## Worship (10 mins)

**THINK** - what goes through your head during worship times? The lyrics we sing usually help us to focus on God, to offer Him our attention and affection. But have you ever found yourself thinking about the person who begged you for money or food that week? Have you ever remembered with sadness the number of people sleeping on the streets around your church or further afield? These aren't thoughts we often associate with worship, but Scripture is clear that poverty and justice matter to God, and even contribute to the authenticity of our worship.

**ASK** - before you sing, ask the Holy Spirit to guide and challenge you about how you can grow in love, mercy, and generosity.

**SING** - We Must Go (Tim Hughes)

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

## Word (30 mins)

Read: Isaiah 61: 1-10

1. What Good News is the prophet bringing to the poor, broken hearted and grief stricken?
2. During times of grief, people would put on sackcloth and cover themselves with ashes as a sign of their mourning. With what will God replace these garments?

3. Are the promises in verse 4-7 primary material or spiritual? Why?
4. Who does the 'me' refer to in verse 1? What stories in the gospels portray Jesus' ministry in terms of these verses? (See Luke 4: 18-19)
5. How do you feel about being called a priest? What would it look like for you to live like a priest this week?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Discuss as a group ways of exercising compassion, wisdom and discernment to the homeless community you encounter. How to say "yes" without being patronising or feeling manipulated, and how to say "no" without being dismissive, demeaning or feeling guilty when you encounter homelessness. Ask the Holy Spirit if anything is being highlighted that you need explore further.

## Witness (5-10 mins)

*On Sunday Jean-Ray from U-Turn spoke about our response as Christians to homelessness. What applications points from his sermon are you challenged to implement in your own life, and in the life of our church?*

*U-Turn emphasize the long-term benefits of giving a Mi-Change voucher rather than cash. Can you give examples of how you have seen this at work?*

*Here's a challenge to your group – would your group consider being the champions for these vouchers at CCK? Email [yvonne@cck.org.za](mailto:yvonne@cck.org.za) to further explore this practical service to our church.*

# What about sending me?

Isaiah 6

## Welcome (5-10 min)

Have you ever been asked by a person in authority to do something out of your comfort zone? Describe, in a sentence, your feelings and response.

## Worship (10 mins)

*"Let worship be the fuel for mission's flame... Let worship be the heart of mission's aim".*

**CONSIDER** - Last week we noted that while the poor may not be constantly in our thoughts during worship, our attitude and actions toward the poor are central to worship. The same applies to mission - at the very moment we are expressing joy in Christ our Saviour, there are many who have not heard that same good news which has changed our lives.

**ASK** - "What effect does worship have on my life, outside of church or small group. Specifically, what could the Holy Spirit be prompting me to do or say that will communicate the saving work of Jesus this week?"

**SING** - Mission's Flame (Matt Redman)

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

## Word (30 mins)

Read: Isaiah 6

1. Imagine you are Isaiah, what do you tell a friend about what you saw, heard and felt in verse 1-4?
2. Compare Isaiah's response in verse 8 with verse 5. What is significant about that?

3. What is Isaiah's new mission? (Verse 9-10) what effect will this mission have on Judah?
4. How is your experience with God like Isaiah's: Awestruck? Guilt-ridden? Cleansed? Are you willing to serve anywhere, anytime?
5. Why has God sent you to your world?

## Wonder (5-10mins)

Isn't it interesting that Isaiah was righteous, a 'good' person, a prophet, yet when confronted by God's divine presence in his throne room, he feels totally unworthy, so sinful. The last kind of person God, in his utter Holiness, might use.

God asks Isaiah "Whom shall I send, who will go?" He wants a volunteer, someone who will choose to accept his invitation. Have you ever felt God's call? Have you responded? Share in the group.

## Witness (5-10mins)

Have you responded to God's call but sort of lost your way, or got side-tracked, or just feel not good enough? Is being a '*called and sent*' Christian relevant to you, if you're an accountant or work in IT or as a receptionist?

Pray in pairs for one another.

# What about work?

Genesis 1:26-31

## Welcome (10 mins)

"Keep calm and Welcome back to work"

If you could create a one-sentence slogan to describe how you feel about work, what would it say?

## Worship (10 mins)

THINK - what goes into your work? Your life, your time, your hands, your feet, your voice, your wealth, your intellect, your will, your heart, your love? Do you ever think of your work as worship? How difficult or easy is it to worship God through the work you do, professionally or privately?

In 1874, a woman named Frances Havergal wrote an incredible hymn dedicating every aspect of her life to the glory of God. She wrote many other hymns, many of which we still sing at CCK today. She was described as someone who "simply and sweetly sang the love of God, and His way of salvation." What a wonderful way to be remembered, and what a wonderful approach to life - worshipping through everything you do, or make, or say. Today's worship song is a beautiful rearrangement of Frances' timeless hymn, rearranged several years ago by worship leader Chris Tomlin. Whatever work looks like for you, dedicate it to God as you sing.

SING - Take My Life and Let It Be

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

## Word (30 mins)

Read Genesis 1:26-31

1. How aware are you of the created world in your everyday life? What aspect of the created world is most inspiring to you and why? How does this affect your understanding of who God is?

2. (Verse 26) What does it mean to be created in the image of God? How does knowing this affect how you feel about yourself?
3. (Verse 27) How should knowing that God has created all of humankind in his likeness affect our relationship with God and with people?
4. (Verse 28) How does the blessing of being fruitful affect the way you engage with the world and with work?
5. What does it mean to honour God with the resources and work he has given you?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

We are made to work. (*This refers to mothers at home with small children, the retired, - everyone*)

We are made to flourish in our workspaces, to have purpose and a feeling that we are where God wants us to be.

That is why the indignity and hopelessness of not having work is so cruel. Or even the scenario where one has too much work, or the feeling that one's work is unsatisfying or that we feel undervalued, or the work environment is hostile. So much emotion surrounds the word 'work'.

- Share in the group what you love about your work and the place you are at, what you enjoy and find value in. What do you find difficult or long for?
- What do you need God to show you, to perhaps open up for you, to lead you?

Pray for one another, that we'll experience our work as worship, that God will fill us with his Spirit to push through difficulties, to be faithful, and to seek his particular dream and plan for us, in our work.

## Witness (5-10 mins)

Describe how your work serves as a way of being God's witness to those you work with.

# What about when I hit rock bottom?

## Psalm 73

### Welcome. (10 mins)

In 2 sentences, state what you do or where you go when you're overwhelmed, disappointed, frustrated? Have you found your meaning-making, comfort-seeking methods to be effective and peace-bringing?

### Worship. (10 mins)

**REFLECT** - How do you worship when what you see around you is wrong or unfair? How do you sing praises to God when your mind is occupied with injustice? How can God allow those who despise and reject him to prosper and succeed? Those were the questions that Asaph, who wrote Psalm 73, wrestled with. It was perhaps even harder for him because he was a worship leader (1 Chronicles 6:31-32,39) who led others in praise.

It's okay to bring your doubts or confusion to God in worship, and it's okay to worship when you feel like you've hit rock bottom. As you'll discover, Asaph overcame his crisis of faith and made a fresh commitment to praise God. Here's a song written in 2021 for moments like that - "*for the valleys, for the harder days*"...

**SING** - Never Fail (Hillsong Young & Free)

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

### Word. (30 mins)

Read Psalm 73

1. Imagine your life now is just a dream (or a nightmare) and when you awake, all will return to 'normal'. What heavy burden, sickness or gross injustice would you like to wish away as if it were just a dream?
2. Do you ever share any of Asaph's (the author of the psalm) envy? Does his insight satisfy you? Why or why not?
3. Can you name some rich and famous people who have committed suicide, gone through a string of unhappy marriages

or lost fortunes to drugs and alcohol? What do you think came first for them? The money or the problems?

4. If you were suddenly rich and famous, would you be free of your problems?
5. Have you ever had a 'sanctuary' experience (verse 17) when? And where? What happened? What are you doing to keep that faith perspective alive?

### Wonder. (5-10 mins)

Asaph holds nothing back from God - his anger, his self-pity, his misery. But he finally goes back to him - realising that his heart had become embittered. He gains relief and understanding. Despite all, he still belongs to God, God is holding him by his right hand, God is still the strength of his heart.

Perhaps you are feeling at rock bottom in your life - in your family situation, about money, depressed, experiencing a problem you can't see your way out of? Maybe you are feeling that our country is at rock bottom or heading that way. As a South African, do you feel desperate about the wicked who seem to prosper, the violent and arrogant, the iniquity that seems to be so prevalent all around us?

- Share stories in the group of how you were perhaps at rock bottom and how God stepped in and saved you.
- In pairs, pray for one another, asking God to help you let go of despair or bitterness or unbelief that he can change things in your situation. Pray for the gift of hope and trust, and to be filled with his Holy Spirit.

### Witness. (5-10 mins)

How can our church support those who believe they have hit rock bottom?

Are you aware of our Pastoral Care ministry, which includes:

- Prayer support, including individual and through our prayer shield
- TLC ministry (meals and flowers)
- Possible support from our Mercy Fund

- Sozo prayer ministry, which is focused prayer for healing and deliverance
- Hospital and bed-bound visitation and Communion

Contact [alison@cck.org.za](mailto:alison@cck.org.za) or [yvonne@cck.org.za](mailto:yvonne@cck.org.za) if you, or someone you know, has hit rock bottom and needs help.

## What about stress and burnout?

Luke 10:38-42

### Welcome (10 mins)

It's been a long day. You've just walked in the door and there is an expectation to provide supper for the family, house mates, parents or children. You were organised this morning and the chicken has defrosted. But now, 9 hours later, you're tired. You're determined to cook the chicken and the three veg. However, It's not going so well. You're slamming cupboard doors, grumbling under your breath preparing the meal while the rest of the household are playing a card game with much laughter. You'd rather be where they are. Could a plate of sandwiches be enough? What drove you to persist in your original plan for supper? Could simplicity with connection be the better choice?

### Worship (10 mins)

**NOTICE** - in today's passage, Martha is preoccupied with *working for* Jesus, while Mary is preoccupied with *being with* Jesus. Both are a reflection of love and devotion, yet Jesus commends Mary. Perhaps this is a reminder for us regarding worship. The 'doing' of worship - praising God with our voices, bodies, and instruments - is a beautiful and wonderful activity. But as we worship, our hearts and our ears are to be as involved as our mouths and our hands.

**IMAGINE** - Take a few moments to picture yourself sitting at Jesus' feet. No plan. No agenda. Simply draw near to Him in mind, heart, and soul. Listen to what He might have to say to you. Then sing this song about delighting in the presence of Jesus...

**SING** - I Love Your Presence

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

### Word (30 mins)

**Read: Luke 10: 38-42**

1. How do these two sisters, Mary and Martha, differ?
2. Who do you think made the better choice? Why?
3. What do you think you would've done if you were placed in that situation? Which sister do you resonate with most?
4. What point do you think Jesus is trying to make in verse 41?
5. Describe a time when you used your work responsibilities or social obligations to avoid Jesus? How do you seek to serve while also keeping God-given priorities?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

In the Western world, in this era, men and women have never worked so hard. The digital revolution, the constant availability, lack of old work/home boundaries, the demands even on small children in a pressured educational system, are relentless. Jesus repeatedly said: "I can only do what I see my Father doing, I can do nothing by myself, the Son only does what he sees the Father doing."

- Think for a minute in silence. Is everything you are doing in your life what God wants you to do? The way he wants you to do it? Are you doing too much? Do you feel resentful, or hopeless about it? Share in pairs. Take a minute to pray for each other.
- Mary was listening to God (*but she'd also probably definitely helped her sister with the meal before he arrived*) Yet she had discovered the most important thing – putting him first. He was right there and she wasn't missing this opportunity. How are you doing this in your life? Share honestly, don't feel condemned.

Let 2 or 3 pray for a re-ordering of our lives, for the Holy Spirit to help us put God first and to listen to him. To make time in our lives for him.

### Witness (5-10 mins)

This account is also a call to simplicity. There is a practical aspect to this story - Jesus tells Martha that her preparations are too elaborate - only one dish is needed. Who in your life is an example of someone who does their best to live simply, and in doing so has time to listen to Jesus and others? What is appealing to you about his or her example?

## What about forgiveness?

Matt 18:21-35

### Welcome (10 mins)

When did you last feel offended? Was the action intentional? How did you respond? And, when did you last inadvertently offend someone?

Why is it easier to forgive friends, colleagues and strangers than family?

### Worship (10 mins)

FORGIVE - Take some time to think back over the past week, month, year. Where did you go? What did you do? Who did you meet? What did you say? What was said to you? What was done to you? Are any of the memories painful? Do any of them make you angry? Were you hurt or mistreated by someone? Forgiveness is so central to our worship, and not just the forgiveness that God extends to us. Our willingness to forgive others is just as important in worship. Jesus made it very clear - to follow Him is to choose to forgive those who hurt us. Ask God to give you the grace to do that today. Forgive who you need to forgive, from your heart. Release them, and receive God's healing by the Holy Spirit. Then praise Him for his grace toward you and the freedom of forgiving others in this song.

SING - Forgiven (Sovereign Grace Music)

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chords [here](#)

### Word (30 mins)

Read Matthew 18: 21-35

1. Offenders in Jesus' day were forgiven up to three times, a fourth offence need not be forgiven. What does Jesus answer in verse 22 tell us about forgiveness in the kingdom?
2. How does the parable of the unmerciful servant extend Jesus' teaching on forgiveness (verses 23 -35)?
3. In refusing to be merciful to others, what do we deny ourselves? (verses 31-34)
4. Do you think we forgive others so God will forgive us, or does God forgive us so that we will have a forgiving attitude? Take some time to unpack and explain your answer.
5. How can we forgive and yet not encourage lack of responsibility?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

Have you ever experienced the joy and release of being forgiven or forgiving another? How did you feel? Share in the group. Forgiveness is very hard. Especially when the wrong done to you is very serious. Or when the one who hurts you, apologizes and then carries on hurting you. Yet God's kindness leads to repentance. He wants to help us forgive so we can be free. Is there something, or someone, you need God's grace and help to forgive? Share in pairs and pray for one another.

### Witness (5-10 mins)

End your time together by praying for Christians in closed countries who are unjustly persecuted for their faith, often by their own family members. Pray for supernatural grace and witness when they feel emotionally and spiritually stretched to forgive 'seventy times'.

Consider receiving from Open Doors the daily prayer calendar for persecuted Christians. They depend on our prayers.  
([www.opendoors.org.za](http://www.opendoors.org.za))

## What about my wallet

Matthew 6:19-24

### Welcome (10 mins)

If you could trade financial lives with one person, who would it be? Why?

### Worship (10 mins)

**FIND THE TREASURE** - *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"*. Jesus wasn't against wealth itself, he was against the destructive power it can so easily exert over us - when it becomes the object of our worship. We can idolise money however large or small our bank balance, that's how powerfully it can rule us if we allow it.

So let's go on a treasure hunt...

Think about the 'stuff' in your life that is deeply important to you. What do your eyes look at and lead your heart to long for, or want to preserve forever?

What material things have mastered you, made you a slave? If you can identify any 'earthly treasure' that has a grip on you, financial or otherwise, ask the Holy Spirit to redirect your thinking and particularly your trust back to the Lord. Ask God if there is a

specific way He wants you to grow in generosity. Thank Him for the everlasting treasure of eternal life through the cross of Jesus.

**SING** - My Worth Is Not In What I Own (Keith & Kristyn Getty, Graham Kendrick)

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#)

### Word (30 mins)

Read Matthew 6:19-24

1. If you were walking through the forest and stumbled across a treasure chest, what would you hope to find inside it?
2. What alternatives does Jesus propose with respect to treasure (verses 19-21), desires (verses 22-23) and masters (verse 24)?
3. What is the link between treasure and heart? Heart and eye? Eye and body? Master and money?
4. Considering this past week, is your 'bank' on earth or in heaven? What do you need to do to change accounts? Who has been your master lately? Why?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

We live in this strange culture, where we are constantly bombarded with the 'not enough' message. Rich or poor, it's not enough - how much more? Just a little bit more! Think honestly about your situation. Do you believe that being content offers you great gain (1 Tim 6:6)? Share with one another.

A regular 'audit' of our attitude towards money can be very profitable. Do we really believe and live out the maxim that 'if we put God first, then **all** these things will be added unto us?'

Pray for one another that we will be able to come to a place of contentment, that we'll be able to put God first, and trust him for our finances and know a new freedom in generous giving.

### Witness (5-10 mins)

Your giving to CCK enables us to generously support our Outreach Partners. At the heart of each of our Outreach Partners ministries is *good news in word and deed*. Having heard from our Partners throughout this year, was there any ministry that touched your heart, and for whom you are pleased we are supporting? If so, why? (*Bettaway Community Church in Delft; Children's Library; U-Turn; SIM; Mercy Ships; CMJ; GEM in Lesotho; Wots*)