

Sunday's Theme – "Acts 15: The Jerusalem Council"

All these components should be present at a normal cell meeting. Some nights you may not get to everything, but each of these should be present at least 75% of the time (e.g. once/month you might not get to the Vision time and so on). The components do not need to be in this order necessarily, except that generally you ought to begin with a welcoming time, and end with a vision time (close the meeting with an *outward focus*).

Please note the time constraints for each part of the meeting!

WELCOME (10 minutes):

The purpose of this time is to "bring people in." You may use an icebreaker, but if you do make sure that it is one that can be completed by everyone in 10 minutes (i.e. each person takes only about a minute to answer). Occasionally, during this time, someone will share a deep need/hurt. If so, feel free to minister to them in prayer etc.

Ice Breaker Question: What was the last film you saw at the cinema?

WORSHIP (15 minutes):

Normally choose 2-3 songs. It's also good to start by reading a short Scripture passage. You may also want to allow time for simple prayers of praise from the group. Optionally, you may also want to incorporate Communion as part of your worship time.

Scripture idea to use:

- 1 John 1:9,10

Song ideas to use:

1. Here I Am To Worship (#25)
2. Refiners Fire (#23)

WORD (20 minutes):

The purpose of this time is not for Bible *study* but instead, Bible *application*. Focus on personal application of scriptural truths. Ask people what concrete actions they should take in response to the scripture.

Read Acts 15:1-11

1. How are our hearts purified and made clean? (see verse 9)
2. Do you feel like your heart is clean?
3. Do you ever try to do things to make your heart more pure, more clean?
4. When we try to make ourselves "more clean", how might our doing that be offensive to Jesus?

5. The simple message of the gospel is “Jesus Plus Nothing”. When we add something to that equation we weaken the power of the gospel. What are you tempted to fill the following blank with: “Jesus Plus _____?”

Read Acts 15:19-21

The verdict of the council was that we really are saved by grace through faith alone. But the church decided to still instruct Gentile believers to follow some of the Jewish dietary laws so as not to offend the Jews in their communities or their fellow Jewish believers.

6. Discuss scenarios in which you might see that it is appropriate to sacrifice your freedom in Christ out of love for another person or group of people.
7. Read 1 Cor 9:19-23 and discuss how this passage relates to this topic of sacrificing our freedom for another.

PRAYER (15 minutes):

Prayer ministry may be incorporated at any time during the meeting. If a lot of prayer ministry took place during the worship time, or as a result of things shared during the word time, don't feel as though you have to have another separate time for prayer. However, if there hasn't been time for prayer elsewhere, please do not short-change this part of the meeting.

As always, if anyone has any pressing needs, encourage folks to share those so that you can pray for them. But also pray that God would show you in what ways you may as a group need to sacrifice your freedom out of love for the people around you who need Jesus.

VISION (5 minutes):

This can be incorporated into a closing prayer time, and should be focused on the vision of the cell: to reach people who don't know Jesus. It may include sharing about those you are praying for, and encouragement in praying for and speaking to those who are not Christians.

As always, close by reminding the group that we are to intentionally maintain that outward focus as a cell group both as we look for ways to serve our community together and to reach out to the forgotten ones who are hungry for the kind of community available in your cell group.

CLOSING & ANNOUNCEMENTS (5 minutes)