

Sunday's Theme – "Acts 16, Part One: What Am I Doing Here in Troas?"

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 is the most lost you've ever been?

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:

- Psalm 25:1-7

Song ideas to use:

1. Good To Me (#28)
2. Lord I Need You (#59)

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 15:40-16:10

Explain: Paul and his missionary team first wanted to go to the province of Asia, but the Holy Spirit said "no". Then they wanted to go to Bithynia, but again the Holy Spirit said "no". We don't know if this "Holy Spirit direction" occurred through direct revelation or through circumstances, but it appears that a series of "closed

doors” leads Paul and his team to the city of Troas. Paul may have been frustrated at this point. His plans had been derailed. He hadn’t expected to end up in Troas. But it is in Troas that he finally receives the divine “yes” along with a vision to go to Macedonia. Doing so would mean crossing over into Europe for the first time – which would have significant impact upon world history. Paul may have at first been discouraged to end up in Troas, but God had a bigger plan in mind that he could not have seen at the time. (NOTE: One other significant thing that happened in Troas was that Luke joined the missionary team of Paul – see 16:8 and 16:10 and compare the grammatical tenses).

1. When have you felt like you took either a wrong turn in life or experienced a series of “closed doors” in life that led you to a place you had not anticipated being at?
 - a. In retrospect can you now see God’s hand guiding you behind the scenes? Can you see a bigger plan God may have had for you that you couldn’t see at the time?
 - b. Sometimes our life is redirected not by God but by our own sinful choices or by something bad done by someone else. We are not to blame God for this. However, he promises to use even these bad things and work out a good plan for us as we turn everything over to him. Have you experienced this reality? If so, can you share examples?
2. Does anyone here feel like they are currently stuck in a place they didn’t expect to be in? Is anyone feeling discouraged right now by the place in life you’re in? If so, can the group pray for you tonight?

Note to Leader: You may want to abandon the form of these questions for a more free flowing discussion. Instead of using the questions above, you may just want to invite the group to take turns sharing a bit of their life stories. As they do, look for ways in which you can point out God’s hand at work in their lives, or encourage them to share how they’ve sensed God guiding them over the years. This can turn into a rich time of learning some deeper things about one another in your group.

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.

Pray for the needs of people in your group and also for the needs of others in the church your group is aware of.

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.

Close the gathering by focusing outward. You may want to encourage the group to be praying for people you can invite to cell group, Sunday morning worship or Alpha. Or you may want to spend this time planning your next outreach or servant evangelism project.

CLOSING & ANNOUNCEMENTS (5 minutes)