

Celebrating Ethnic Diversity – Cell Notes

Welcome:

What is your favourite meal? When you prepare it at home, where do the ingredients come from?

Where were you born and grow up? What “traditions” from there have you brought with you?

What colour is God? (Not what skin colour, but what shade best describes God for you at the moment – for example red for angry with you, green for peaceful/environmental, orange for passionate etc.)

Word:

Read Galatians 3:26-29, Acts 17:22-31 and Genesis 1:27

- If God created us in his own image and “male and female he created them”, what other human traits reflect God’s image? Skin colour? Muscular build? Is there one “human image” that describes God better than others? Are we lead to believe there is when certain people are described as being god-like in physique, appearance etc
- Athens was a major port city with all sorts of sounds, smells, flavours and gods. The “Unknown God” was one of many, and Paul used this to preach the gospel. What sets our God apart from other gods worshipped in the world today? (“Gods” may include other religions or false gods such as fashion, sport, technology etc) As Paul spoke, he told it as it was.
- How has the history of this country been influenced by its trade/Empire links? (slavery, tea/coffee trade, spice trade over the centuries etc?)
- How has that enriched the fabric of what is now British society?

Worship:

- Think back to the welcome and where you were born/grew up. Look at those around you and thank God for the different habits/traditions that people have brought to your cell from other parts of the country.
- Play or sing “Bind us together” (and/or other suitable material)
- Using three different colours of wool, play the game “Spiders Web” (see attached sheet for leaders notes on this.)
- After the game, cut the web up so that everyone has a piece of each different colour of wool, and encourage them weave/plait them together. As they are doing this, remind them that we are all made in the image of God, regardless of colour/background/gender etc, and that our interwoven lives enrich and strengthen us. It was a lot easier to break 1 bit of wool than it is to break 3 interwoven ones!

Witness:

- When you are next preparing a meal, check where the ingredients came from and pray for that country/region
- Perhaps fashion your piece of wool into a bracelet and wear it to work. Use it to explain how God is God for all of us, regardless of background.
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Cell notes for week commencing 7th April

Issues facing Christians: Simplicity, Generosity and Contentment

Welcome:

If you had to get rid of one piece of furniture or equipment from your home what would it be and why?

Or

What item of furniture or equipment could you never part with and why?

Worship:

You could do this in a couple of different ways:

Either: Using a large piece of paper make a list together of all the things that you are thankful for in your life. Encourage the group to think of practical, material things like 'car' and 'microwave' as well as general ideas such as 'family', 'good health'.

Or: Give out small pieces of paper (each person may need several) and get them to write one thing that they are thankful for in their life on each piece (as above) then scatter the pieces of paper on the floor.

Spend some time in prayer thanking God.

You may want to close this section by singing some songs or hymns of thankfulness.

Word:

Read together 1 Timothy 6:6-10 & 17-end. Then in small groups consider the following questions (you may choose to feedback your thoughts to the whole of the group each time)

- Is it a bad thing to be wealthy?
- What challenges does wealth bring?
- What do you think the writer means by 'contentment'?
- What limits our generosity, e.g. is it our resources, our attitudes, our lack of information about certain issues etc.?

Witness:

Again in small groups think about how you could live a more simple, contented and generous life. Try to identify one thing that you could do towards achieving this then spend time praying for each other.

Biotechnology Cell Notes - week commencing 21st April

Welcome

If you could breed a cross between 2 animals, e.g. a labradoodle or a liger, what would it be and why?

Worship

Read Psalm 139:1-18

- How does it make you feel to know that God loves you just as you are and knows you completely?
- Play some gentle music and silently reflect upon how well God knows you – you may want to think about something that no other person knows about you, but God does.

Word

Read Matthew 1:1-16 and 1 John 1:1-4

1. What does 1 John 1:1-2 tell us about Jesus?
2. Contrast this with what Matthew tells us about Jesus.
3. Which account is more relevant to you in your Christian walk and why?

There are far too many aspects of biotechnology to discuss in one session. Some examples are the scanning of embryos before implantation in the womb, genetically modifying plants and 'growing' body tissues in a laboratory.

Discuss whether you think any of the following are acceptable uses of biotechnology.

- Selecting to implant an embryo just on the basis of gender, e.g. a couple want a baby girl
- Selecting to implant an embryo so that the child won't develop an inherited disease
- Commodification of human body parts e.g. buying and selling egg cells or kidneys (for transplant).

Witness

As a society, people are becoming increasingly obsessed with perfecting their image. What image should we show to others and why?

Spend some time praying for this and any other needs you have as a cell.

CELL GROUPS WEEK COMMENCING 28 APRIL 2008

FAITHFULNESS AND WHOLENESS IN RELATIONSHIPS

WELCOME

What is your favourite memory of time spent, as a child, with your father?
Your mother?

WORSHIP

Everyone pray only 'Thank You' prayers. This is good to do because most people will find it hard to pray without eventually turning it into an asking prayer and it's quite a challenge to keep the prayer thankful only. At the end concentrate on thank you prayers for those closest to us.

WORD

We are looking this week at faithfulness and wholeness in relationships, particularly marriage, but also remembering those co-habiting and those in same-sex relationships. We are not expected to judge but rather to discuss the issues. Remember that some in the group may find these issues difficult and painful.

- 1 The teaching of Jesus. Read Matthew 19:3-12. What did Jesus teach about:
 - (a) The purpose of marriage
 - (b) The permanence of marriage
 - (c) The concessions for divorce
 - (d) Cohabitation outside of marriage
- 2 The teaching of Paul. Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-16. What did Paul teach about (a) to (d) above.
- 3 We live in different times from those when Jesus and Paul spoke. Laws and morals regarding relationships have changed. Does this produce tensions and conflicts for Christians living in the 21st century? How far should we allow the teaching of the New Testament to be influenced by modern society's thinking and vice-versa?
- 4 How does this New Testament teaching speak to us about our wider non-sexual relationships?

WITNESS

Break into twos or threes. Talk about any personal issues this discussion has raised for you. Then pray for each other that Jesus may help each of us to face up to these issues and will help our personal relationships to improve.

Cell notes for week commencing 5th or 12th May 2008

Theme: Ascension

Welcome:

What is the highest you have ever been? (Top floor of a skyscraper, in an aircraft, up a mountain etc) and how did it make you feel?

Or

Have a go at building a house from a pack of cards – see how high you can get. You may like to work in teams with a pack of cards for each team and set a time limit of say 5 to 10 minutes.

Word:

Acts 1:1-11

Read together the Acts passage then discuss in small groups:

- What do you feel are the key points from these verses
- Jesus makes it clear to the disciples that he will return, but gives no indication when. Christians have to live without this knowledge too – does this affect how you live your life?
- Why do you think it was necessary for Jesus to be taken up into heaven?
- When do you think Jesus will return? Are there any factors that may affect this?

Witness:

Look at Ephesians 1:22-23. God has given all authority and power to Jesus. Are there areas in your life where Jesus doesn't have control, or comes in second place?

- In 2's and 3's discuss this and then spend some time praying for each other. Pray too for those who need the power of Jesus in their lives.

Worship:

'I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in all my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.' Ephesians 1:16-17

Read these verses slowly and prayerfully a couple of times to let them really sink in.

Play some quiet music and encourage the group to spend time listening to what God may want to show them as they reflect on these verses.

It may be that some would like to share what they have received.

Finish with either a song of praise or say a Psalm together (eg Psalms 1, 8, 67, 150 etc etc)