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How to use this book.

At St Paul's we are committed to growing as disciples of Jesus, spurring each other on to know and grow in Jesus. We know that God works through His Word powerfully to teach and transform us, and so we know the importance of seeing God's Word regularly sown into our lives and throughout the week.

We do that daily as we personally open God's Word and depend on Him in prayer. We also grow as we meet in our households to read God's Word together.

Over time we've seen that as we study the same passage from God's Word in different layers in our lives, that God builds depth in our understanding, stronger application in our lives, and encouragement in our households and in our church as we learn together.

As we spend time learning and thinking about our Vital signs this term, we are doing that in a few ways...

CHURCH

Keep this guide with your bible and have it with you as you as you participate in church. Scribble down sermon notes in the space provided, ready to reflect on these personally, as you meet with someone 121, and as you meet up with your Small Group.

SMALL GROUPS

Take this guide with you to your Small Group each week. There are Bible studies for each of the Vital Signs, and space to write down prayer points that come from the study that week as well as prayer requests from the members of your group.

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

Keep an eye on our **Facebook group** for parents as we will share devotional content throughout the term that will help you as you disciple your children. (If you are not part of the group already and would like to join please email ***kids@spch.org.au***)

Setting the scene for our Vital Signs series.

INTRODUCTION

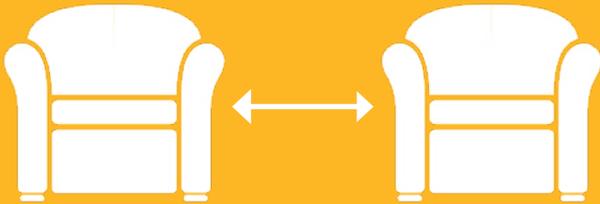
At St Paul's we use Vital Signs to measure our spiritual heartbeat. They are known by the following titles:



During this series we aim to understand these Vital Signs as well as work practically to develop good habits as disciples of Jesus.

As we begin this term and our groups are returning to meeting face to face, we encourage you to spend extra time at the start of this study catching up, finding out how people are going, and making sure people are comfortable before the study begins.

Be aware that group members will be at different places - some people may be anxious meeting again, while others will be very keen. And please be considerate of the host of your group, helping them meet COVID-19 guidelines in terms of cleaning and physical distancing



Ensure your space allows people to sit one chair apart from each other.



Cordon off areas you do not wish guests to use (use visible signs). This will reduce areas needing disinfecting.



Clean and disinfect all commonly used surfaces (tables, door handles, door frames). Do this BEFORE and AFTER the gathering. Provide hand sanitiser as guests enter your home, or where you hold small group.



If possible provide disposable disinfectant wipes and a bin ready for guests to clean the bathroom surface areas after each use (flush, disinfect the door and tap handle).



Always be willing to serve your guests to minimise them touching surfaces in your home.

STUDY ONE

Growing People Change

2 PETER 1:3-8



INTRODUCTION

The Vital Sign of Growing People Change is not always easy to see or measure as it can happen over a long period of time or subtly.

QUESTIONS

1. Can you identify a time when you feel that you have grown the most? Please share with the group should you feel comfortable to do so.

2. Read **2 Peter 1:3-8**. What is the source of power to live a godly life? Are desires evil? What evil desires are a struggle for you?

3. In verses 5-7 what things do you feel convicted to work on? Why do you think Peter constructs this list with one thing added to the other?

4. What do you think Peter means by "make every effort" (verse 5)?

5. What do you think is a consequence of verse 9?

MAKING IT STICK

Below is a link to our Vital Signs survey. As we begin our series it would be good to gauge where we are at and to encourage us to grow in the love and knowledge of Jesus. The Vital Signs are a way of indicating how we are going (but not definitive). This should not be an exercise to make sure you are ticking the right boxes, but encourage growth as the things listed in this passage are becoming natural.

[COMPLETE THE VITAL SIGNS SURVEY >>](#)

PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray that we will grow into the likeness of the Son.
- Pray that God will uphold us as we change even if it is painful.
- Grant us a growing affection for Jesus as we grow so that we might be faithful and grateful toward Jesus which is reflected in our lives.

STUDY TWO

God's People Gather

REVELATION 7:9-10



INTRODUCTION

Just who are God's people and whom do they gather around? How are they all united together as one body? This passage of scripture in the book of Revelation describes to us who God's people are, what makes them his people and who his people are gathered around.

QUESTIONS

1. Without reading Revelation 7:9-10, based on your thoughts, what does it mean to be God's people and what does it mean for you to gather before God? Encourage people to share their thoughts within the group.
2. **Read v9.** How does John describe the people of "The Great Multitude"? What does this tell us about how God's people meet?

3. **Read v9** again. Who is the "Great Multitude"? Why is it so significant that they are all standing together before the throne and the Lamb?

4. What are the Redeemed Multitude wearing and holding in v9? What do these represent?

5. **Read v10**. What do the Redeemed multitude cry out? What does this say about God?

6. What does this passage tell us about God gathering his people?

MAKING IT STICK

Discuss the importance of prioritising gathering as God's people.

Evaluate the way God's people gather in the Western Culture.

What do we do well? What can we improve on?

How has this affected you during COVID season?

PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray that God would continue to gather His people despite hindering circumstances.

GROUP PRAYER POINTS FROM TODAY:

STUDY THREE

God's People Gather

HEBREWS 3:7-14



INTRODUCTION

When God's People Gather, why are they gathering? What happens to individuals and the church as a result of gathering? This study will help unpack these two questions. Last week's study was based on the who, what and how of God's People. This week's study is focused more on the why. **This article** may be a great resource and point of discussion

QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever wondered exactly why we gather as God's People? Discuss why you think it is Important to Gather as God's People.

2. **Read 1 Peter 2:9.** Why do God's chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His special possession gather? How do these descriptions of God's people guide the way we gather as God's people?

3. Read **Matthew 28:19-20** and **Ephesians 4:11-13**. Why is it important that the Church meets together?

4. Read **Ephesians 5:18-20** and **Colossians 3:16-17**. Why is it important that the Church meets together?

5. Read **Hebrews 3:7-14** and **Hebrews 10:19-25**. Why is it important that the Church meets together?

6. After going through the past passages of scripture, discuss some of the ways your small group can ensure that when God's People Gather (121 discipleship, small groups, cohort events and Sunday services etc...) they are testifying that Jesus is King and individuals and groups are being formed as God's people. As well as worshipping and exalting God for who he is and what he has done and that God's people are encouraged to persevere in the faith.

MAKING IT STICK

When I gather with God's people, how do we testify Jesus as King?

When I gather with God's people, how can I make sure that the congregation and I are being formed into God's people?

When I gather with God's people, am I giving thanks to God for who He is and what He's done?

When I gather with God's people, how can I encourage them to persevere in the faith?

PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray that God would continue to form His church.
- Ask God to show you areas in your life where you can give thanks.
- Pray for those who may not be able to gather with God's people as easily during COVID-19

GROUP PRAYER POINTS FROM TODAY:

STUDY FOUR

Forgiven People Give

EPHESIANS 4:7-28



INTRODUCTION

In this passage Paul insists (v17) that we no longer live as we used to. Having been forgiven we need to put on our new self of righteousness and holiness. Our thinking should no longer be futile, nor our understanding darkened, for our hearts are no longer hard. We are no longer insensitive and ignorant. One of the new attitudes he commands is to work, remarkably not so we have money but so we can share with those in need (v28)!

Too often Christians are known by the world as self-righteous hypocrites. Imagine if we were known for our generosity! How much easier would it be to speak of being created to be like our generous God (v24), or to explain the gospel of grace ("freely you have received, freely give"; Matthew 10:8).

QUESTIONS

1. Watch **this video**. (Sarah Montana TEDx talk)

2. What do you like about this talk? Does God fit the criteria of someone who forgives? How is God different from what is talked about?

3. Watch **this video**. What did you like about the video? What did you not like? What did you learn? According to **Ephesians 4:7-28** what excess do we have with which we can be generous?

4. What reason does the Apostle Paul give in verse 28 for working? Why is this surprising?

5. How does this passage define generosity? What do we learn about generosity?

MAKING IT STICK

Can you share a time when you have benefitted from someone's generosity and it does not have to be financial?

Can you share a time when God has given you the opportunity to be generous?

Do you ever find it hard to give to church? If so, why do you think this is?

PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Thank God for his great and ongoing generosity in forgiving us.
- Pray that we are able to forgive those who sin against us.
- Pray that we will grow in our generosity toward God and others.
- Pray that God will uphold our church through the generosity of his people.

GROUP PRAYER POINTS FROM TODAY:

STUDY FIVE

Forgiven People Give

1 TIMOTHY 6:6-21



INTRODUCTION

Last week took time to think through what it is for God to forgive and the generosity that results from us in response to that. This week we want to think more practically about how we can be generous.

Our passage from 1 Timothy 6 Paul teaches Timothy, among other things, on contentment, what we ought to pursue and generosity.

QUESTIONS

1. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-21. What in the passage seems too difficult? Why do you think this?

2. In verses 6-10 for what reasons should we be content?

3. In verses 11-16 what does Paul say they ought to pursue? What does it look like to pursue these things?

4. In verses 17-21 what are the different ways that we can be rich?

5. What is the result of generosity? What do you think it means to lay up treasure in heaven?

MAKING IT STICK

What can you do with your time as an offering to others?

When do you find it difficult to be generous with your money?

What is something you can change this week to be more generous?

PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray for our Compassion children that we will be generous toward them.
- Pray for Anglicare.

GROUP PRAYER POINTS FROM TODAY:

STUDY SIX

Found People Find People

1 THESSALONIANS 2:1-8



INTRODUCTION

One of the key aims of these studies is to get Small Groups going out and doing ministry. It's one thing to have knowledge about God, but genuine belief should spur you into action. With this in mind, a number of our studies are going to have really practical applications – the studies themselves will be shorter, and we'll try and find you a practical way that you can put what you're discussing into action. This week is one of those weeks. We encourage you to organise a time to go through this study that isn't your normal time so that you can undertake the practical element of this study as a group – maybe seek to meet up for a Saturday lunch instead of a Monday night, for example.

The aim of this study is to look into what it actually means to be a found person, and give you and your Small Group a practical, concrete way to go out and find people. Hopefully by the end of this study you'll have a greater understanding of your identity in Christ and be motivated to go out and seek the lost as a group!

QUESTIONS

1. Read **Luke 19:10**. What does the word found tell you about us as humans? Who does the finding?

2. With Luke 19:10 in mind, why is being *found* by God so important, and what eternal implications does it have for us?

3. Read **2 Peter 3:9**. What is our motivation for finding people?

4. Read **1 Thessalonians 2:4**. How does God enable us to find people?

5. What practical steps can you take to find people this week?

MAKING IT STICK

At this point, we're going to practically undertake what we've just discussed. As this week is all about finding people, we want you to engage in a group evangelism activity. How you do this and what this looks like is up to you, but here are a couple of practical ideas you could do:

Street evangelism – go out into the street finding people you don't know and sharing the Gospel with them, inviting them to church, and teaching them about Jesus.

Saturday/Sunday lunch, focused on bringing non-Christians into Christian community – each member of the Bible Study is obligated and asked to invite one/more non-Christian friend/s to lunch, where they can meet other Christians. This is a great opportunity to, as Sam Chan says, help your non-Christian friends meet your Christian friends, and for you to share your Gospel-centred story. Get a couple of members to share their testimony of how Jesus has transformed/impacted their lives!

GROUP PRAYER POINTS FROM TODAY:

STUDY SEVEN

Saved People Serve

EPHESIANS 4:7-16



INTRODUCTION

Again, this week is going to be focused on the practical side of ministry. We want to hear of how you and your Small Group has been out serving other people, in the hope of advancing the kingdom! It would be great if you could organise to have this study at a time where it's possible for you to practically exercise the things you're discussing!

QUESTIONS

1. Read **Ephesians 2:1-10**. What does it mean to be saved and how are we saved as Christians?

2. What eternal implications does salvation have for you?

3. Re-read **Ephesians 2:10**. What do you think the good works are that Paul describes here?

4. Read **Philippians 2:5-11**. What does having the same mindset as Christ Jesus involve? How can we do this today?

5. What are some practical ways that you can serve others around you?

MAKING IT STICK

At this point, we're going to practically undertake what we've just discussed. As this week is all about serving people, we want you to engage in a group service activity. How you do this and what this looks like is up to you, but here are a couple of practical ideas you could do:

Organise to join together and participate in SPCH's Help at Home on a Saturday.

Give up a night to volunteer at a specific organisation (Samaritan's Purse and Anglicare, among others, all have regular opportunities to volunteer).

Spend a night cooking food for the homeless, and delivering it to those in need. If you don't have the physical ability to do this, spend a night cooking meals for SPCH's care roster.

GROUP PRAYER POINTS FROM TODAY:

STUDY EIGHT

Called People Follow

EPHESIANS 4:1-6



INTRODUCTION

Being called by God is a crucial and central doctrine in the Christian faith. This week we unpack what it means to be called by God (looking at the two main “callings” people receive) and how being called by God can and should impact your daily walk with God and your ministry too.

QUESTIONS

1. Read Ephesians 4:1-6. What do you think it means to be called by God in this passage?

2. In what areas of your life do you find it hardest to follow Jesus? What impact should this calling have on your day-to-day life?

3. Why is it important that "Called" people follow?

4. Read **1 Corinthians 7:17-24**. To what calling do these verses refer? What changes when we follow Jesus and what does not change?

5. Read Ephesians **4:11-13**. What do these verses say about how called people follow?

6. With the calling to salvation (as expressed in Ephesians 4:1-6) as the basis for the calling to ministry (as expressed in Ephesians 4:11-13), how can you use your gifts to build up the church and glorify God?

MAKING IT STICK

What areas can you work on to “live a life worthy of the calling you have received”?

How might you overcome any obstacles to this?

PRAYER

In addition to responding to today’s passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray for God to sustain us as we follow him.
- Pray we will have wisdom as we follow him in a way that is honouring to him.

GROUP PRAYER POINTS FROM TODAY:

STUDY NINE

Called People Follow

ACTS 17:10-12



INTRODUCTION

How well do you think you follow God and how well do you know His Word? Do you dwell in it day and night? What is your attitude towards scripture? In this small passage in acts we hear of the Berean church who are well known for their eagerness to examine carefully in order that they might be able to discern the truth.

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss within the group what you find hard about reading and learning from scripture. It could be anything from long words that are hard to understand to dense theological passages that are hard to follow or even passages that seem like they offer no meaning whatsoever.

2. Read **2 Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 3:16, Philipians 2:12**. Discuss why it is important as a called believer to self teach and educate ourselves with the Word of God?

3. Read **Acts 17:1-9**. How did Paul go about persuading some of the Jews in Thessalonica? Why is this so important?

4. Read **Acts 17:10-12**. What can you identify in this passage about the way the Bereans went about spending time in scripture? Do you think your small group examines scripture with the same intent as the Bereans? What can we take away from the way the Bereans examined scripture?

5. Read **Matthew 22:36-40, John 8:31-32, John 10:27 and John 14:15**. [Watch this video](#). From this video and the verse above how do you think a Called Believer can follow Jesus well? In what ways do you think you follow Jesus well? Which ways do you think you can improve on?

MAKING IT STICK

Remember that God's Call on our life is to follow Him! To follow him well we must dive head first into the scriptures and allow them to teach us how to do this well. Perhaps when you read the bible this week you could the following three questions of the text:

- What does it say about God?
- What does it say about us?
- What will I do to follow Jesus more closely?

PRAYER

In addition to responding to today's passage and praying for your group members, please be praying for:

- Pray for insight into God's word as we read it.
- Pray for our Care ministry and those on our Care teams

GROUP PRAYER POINTS FROM TODAY:

Sermon Notes.

SERMON ONE – SUNDAY 11TH OCTOBER

Growing People Change

2 PETER 1:3-8

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...

SERMON TWO – SUNDAY 18TH OCTOBER

God's People Gather

Revelation 7:9-10

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...

SERMON THREE – SUNDAY 25TH OCTOBER

God's People Gather

Hebrews 3:7-14

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...

SERMON FOUR – SUNDAY 1ST NOVEMBER

Forgiven People Give

Ephesians 4:21-28

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...

SERMON FIVE – SUNDAY 8TH NOVEMBER

Forgiven People Give

1 Timothy 6:6-21

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...

SERMON SIX - SUNDAY 15TH NOVEMBER

Found People Find People



1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Sermon Notes...

Personal Application...

SERMON SEVEN – SUNDAY 22ND NOVEMBER

Saved People Serve

Ephesians 4:7-16

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...

SERMON EIGHT - SUNDAY 29TH NOVEMBER

Called People Follow

Ephesians 4:1-6

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...

SERMON NINE – SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER

Called People Follow

Acts 17:10-12

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...

SERMON TEN - SUNDAY 20TH DECEMBER

Growing People Change

1 Peter 1:13-16

Sermon Notes...



Personal Application...



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