

Life Group – Week 1

Leader: Welcome to this Life Group (Spiritual Formation Group). May the Holy Spirit bless us, and may we find fellowship and encouragement during this time together. We come together with one aim – to become better disciples of Jesus Christ. We do this by encouraging one another to keep Jesus' word which is what we naturally do when we love him (John 14:23-24). Through the grace of mutual accountability, we strive to inspire one another to love and good works. Everything said here is in confidence. We are safe and free to share honestly. This is how we help each other.

A few moments for silent prayer

Together: In utter dependence upon Jesus Christ as my ever-living Saviour, Teacher, Lord and Friend, I will seek continual renewal in the power of the Holy Spirit and daily transformation into the likeness of Christ.

In turn read through the *Common Disciplines* which are statements of intention based on the six traditions (see *Share*).

- By God's grace, I will set aside time regularly for prayer, meditation and spiritual reading and will seek to practise the presence of God.
- By God's grace, I will strive mightily against sin and will do deeds of love and mercy.
- By God's grace, I will welcome the Holy Spirit, exercise His gifts and nurture His fruit. I will live in the joy and power of the Spirit.
- By God's grace, I will endeavour to serve others everywhere I can and will work for justice in human relationships and social structures.
- By God's grace, I will share my faith with others as God leads and will study the scriptures regularly.
- By God's grace, I will joyfully seek to show forth the presence of God in all that I am, in all that I do and in all that I say.

Scripture Reading, reflection and sharing - Psalm 42

List all the emotions which the psalmist experiences – thirsty, broken-hearted, homesick, discouraged, hopeful. How many of those emotions have you experienced in the last week? Which word would best describe how you feel about your spiritual life?

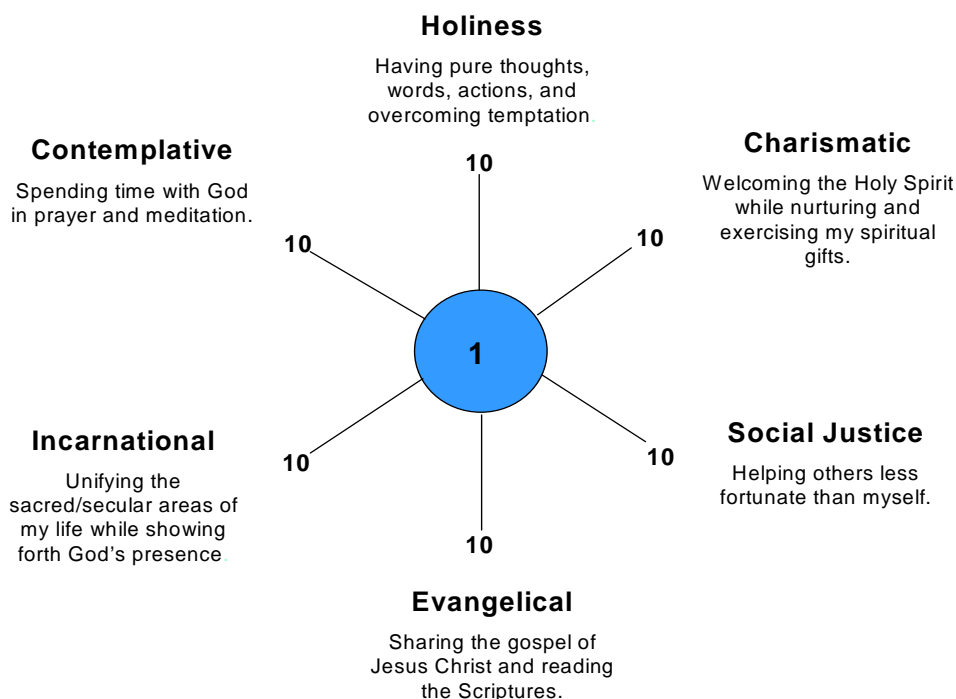
Questions of the heart

Beginning with the leader, each member is encouraged to share from their experiences in the past week. Select from the following questions to help focus the discussion.

- **Have you sensed any influence or work of the Holy Spirit?** What spiritual gifts has he enabled you to exercise? What fruit of the Spirit would you like to see increase in your life? Which disciplines might be useful in this effort?

- **In what ways have you been able to manifest the presence of God through your daily work?** How has God fed and strengthened you through the ministry of word and sacrament?

Looking over the six traditions of the church, identify the area that you would consider to be your greatest strength, and which you would consider your weakest. On each 'spoke' of the wheel score yourself with a dot, estimating how strong you are in each area. Connect the dots to form a ring around the hub. Share your reflections and ask what God might want you to do about a wheel that goes bump, bump.



Looking ahead - Think about which area or areas you would like to work on this week. Share your plans and then pray for each other.

Ending - Each member speaks a word of encouragement to other members individually, mentioning gratefully what God has done in their lives. e.g. *“Bill, I want to encourage you in your ability to help others, and I thank God for the support and inspiration you have been to me.”*

Leader: Please remember that what we have heard here was spoken in confidence and should remain so. May the love, peace and power of God be with us during this week.