I. WELCOME, 15 mins.
Prepare a couple of simple, fun, and delightful icebreakers to help your group warm up. Help your cell members to put aside their busy & tiresome lives, and prepare their hearts to come before God.

II. WORSHIP, 20 mins.
Prayerfully, choose a few songs that will lead cell members to worship God. The worship leader should encourage cell members to come before the throne of God, see God’s face, and lead them into God’s presence. During this time, the cell leader will also lead the group to pray aloud for the following prayer items:

A. MISSION ORGANIZATION: ____________, and their needs are: ____________
(Please contact the church if you don’t know the needs of the mission organization.)

B. CHURCH MINISTRY EVENTS:
- 8/24 Intern Cell Leader Training
- 8/30 Evangelism Outreach
- 9/01 English Family Luncheon
- 9/07 “Identity Unleashed” Event (with Jeremy Lin, Francis Chan)
- 9/08 Ministry Coworker Recruitment Sunday
- 9/14 Men’s Breakfast with Pastor Tong
- 9/15 Cell Group Promotion Sunday

C. Newcomer: _________________ Identify newcomers before the cell meeting. Sick members, friends or relatives: _________________ Please also discuss how you may show your care for them.

III. WORD: 45 mins. By sharing God’s Word, the group may discuss how to apply it to their daily lives.

A. Sharing message from last Sunday’s sermon: (It would be helpful if you could listen to it on-line again.)

  1. What was the key message from last Sunday’s sermon? How did God talk to you through the message?

B. Discussion Topic: The Greatest Commandment

Scriptures: Mark 12: 28-34, 41-44 (Please read Bible verses taking turns)

Memorizing Verse: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength. (Mark 12:30)

Jesus countered the Sadducees’ erroneous concept of “marriage at the resurrection.” He explained to them with Moses’ teaching, that our God is “not the God of the dead, but of the living.” When the dead rise, they neither marry nor be given in marriage. As the Pharisees and the scribes over-ly stuck with their pedantic approaches to God’s commandments, they induced people to sin.

1. The greatest commandment is the most important commandment (28-34): At that time, in order for people to follow commandments, the Pharisees set up 613 precepts, with 365 don’ts and 248 dos. These precepts also further categorized as major/minor, critical/moderate. While over-focusing on these rules, the Jews moved away from God. That’s why Jesus taught the Jewish people by answering questions from the scribes.

   1) Love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind and strength (28-34): Jesus answered the scribe with Deut. 6:4-5, a) Trust that the Lord is the one and only one true God. The contract God signed with His people is a contract of love and for eternity. b) In this contract of love, He gave His own life to His people. In return, His people should also submit themselves to God, love God wholeheartedly. God alone is their joy and satisfaction. Nothing else can compare with Him.

   2) Love your neighbor as yourself: Whoever loves God will love others. Man is created in the image of God, and is with the glory and beauty of God. Back in Jesus’ time, the Jewish people were very selective when it came to love – they only loved their own kind. Yet, we find examples in the Old Testament that showed how God loved the people of Nineveh and gave them a chance to repent. The grandmother of David, Ruth, was a Gentile, a Moabite. Jesus also taught the Jewish people how to be a good Samaritan. (Luke 10: 29-37)

When Jesus saw that the scribe had answered wisely, He said to
him, “you are not far from the kingdom of God” as Jesus truly hoped he could follow these 2 commandments.

2. The widow’s offering is an example of loving God with all your heart (41-44): People went to the temple to offer and to pray. The outer court of the temple was for the Gentiles to pray, going up from there used to be a court for women. Going further inside, only Jewish men could be there. There used to be 13 offering boxes around the women’s court for everyone to put in their offering money. From how people offered, Jesus knew how much they loved God.

1) Jesus sat and watched the crowd putting in their offering: The widow lived a scarce, poor life, and had no one to rely on. No one would complain even if she didn’t offer anything, but she came anyways and put in two small copper coins. Jesus said the poor widow “has put more into the treasure,” because that was all she had to live on and that also shows how much she loved God. Out of her poverty, she presented everything without reservation.

3. The Lord values the offering not because of the wealth but out of what is in all our hearts: It was through wholehearted love that the widow offered all that she had; offering is the direct response of our love to God.

Discussion: (Discuss according to the needs of your cell group)

1. Why is loving God the greatest commandment?

2. What was the response of the scribe towards Jesus’ teaching? Why would Jesus say, “you are not far from the kingdom of God?”

3. Why did Jesus value the poor widow’s offering? What teaching did Jesus give us about the poor widow?

4. Try and give us some examples about how we can follow these 2 commandments in our daily lives.

5. What is the attitude we should have when it comes to offering?

Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank You for teaching us how to love You with all our heart, all our will, all of our mind and all our strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Because we love You, we are learning to offer with all our heart so that You may use it for the Kingdom. Lord! Examine my heart, investigate my thoughts, and see if there’s any wickedness in me. Please also forgive me if I have ever not done well on the commandments You have taught me. Help me to love You entirely, love the people around me, and to be able to offer without reservation. My whole life is meant to love You, witness You and to glorify You. I pray in Jesus’ name. Amen!

IV. WORK (Pray for each other), 10 mins.

Please break into groups of 2 or 3 to pray for each other’s needs.

Note:

Back in Jesus’ time, a “piece of money” referred to the bronze lepton, which was the smallest unit of their currency. “Big money” referred to the quadrans (quadran), which was the smallest unit of Roman coin. Two small leptons equaled one quadrans.