1 Peter Series 3
Join together and be built into God’s Temple
March 7, 2014

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

II. WORSHIP, 20 mins.
Prayerfully choose a few songs to lead the cell group members to worship God. The worship leader would encourage members to come before the throne of God to seek God’s face, and lead them into God’s presence. During this time, the cell group 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:
   - 2/2-3/9 Love and Respect, 11:30-12:45pm in Fellowship Hall
   - 3/5 & 3/19 Bi-Weekly English Prayer Meeting @ 7:30PM in Fellowship Hall
   - 3/16 English Family Luncheon

C. Newcomer: ________________ Confirm new comers’ name before the meeting.
   For sick members, friends or relatives: ________________ Please discuss how you may show your care to them.

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

A. Sharing message from last Sunday’s sermon: (It would be helpful if you could listen on-line once again)
   1. What is the key message from last Sunday sermon? How did God speak to you through the message?
   2. How would you respond to the message? What action will you take after listening to the message?

B. Topic of the week: Join together and Be Built into God’s Temple
   Verses: 1 Peter 2:1-10 – Please read God’s words and memorize it.
   Memorizing Verses: Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:5 NIV)

Since we have all the imperishable inheritance from God and full redemption the Lord will bring to us when He returns, we should long for God’s Words, so that we may grow and live like Jesus, be united in Christ to build God’s temple together, and to serve God and one another in order to spread the news of God’s salvation.

1. To long for God’s Words in order to grow (1 Peter 2: 1-3):
   A. First, to rid ourselves of what we used to do as non-believers. (1 Peter 2: 1) Since we have already been saved, we should live like a new creation. Therefore, we should rid ourselves of those conducts that make us enemies of God and fall short of God’s glory, such as all malice, all greed, insincerity to cover up our evil intents and conducts, envy when others are better than we are, and all slander and judgments.
   B. To long for God’s Words (1 Peter 2: 2). We should long for God’s Words, like newborn infants long for the spiritual milk, so that we can be nurtured, grow and become mature. The spiritual milk is God’s pure Words. According to Hebrews 5:14, God’s Word can train our faculties by practicing to distinguish good from evil, so that we can stay away from sin, and live a holy life by relying on the Holy Spirit.
   C. To experience more of the Lord’s Grace (1 Peter 2: 3). God’s Words have shown us how great all the spiritual blessings from Him are. When we submit ourselves to His Words, we can experience His faithfulness and His grace, which make us long for God’s Words even more.

2. Jesus is the cornerstone for the Temple (1 Peter 2: 4-8)
   A. Jesus is the living stone that is precious to God (1 Peter 2:4)
   In the past the Jewish people didn’t realize that Jesus was the Messiah that they had been expecting for centuries, so they despised him and rejected him. But he was chosen by the Heavenly Father long before creation. The Heavenly Father
honors Jesus as a precious living stone.

B. Like Jesus, we are the living stones, precious to God

(1 Peter 2: 5)

We have been redeemed by Jesus, who for our sake gave up his life, a life of a living stone. So in God’s eyes, we are as precious as Jesus. Therefore, 1) When we run into difficulties and get rejected by others, we need to firmly believe that we are chosen by God and precious to Him. There is a resurrected life in us, full of hope. 2) We should serve God together as different parts of a body: When we submit to the will of the Lord and serve God together as different parts of a body, God’s Temple will be built up. 3) Offer sacrifices as priests: In the Old Testament, God chose the Levites as priests to offer sacrifice and pray for the whole nation of Israel. In the New Testament, each believer is a priest that can directly offer sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ, and to supplicate for himself or for others. The sacrifices in the Old Testament were substances like the flawless ox or lamb. The sacrifices in the New Testament are the “spiritual ones” offered through Jesus Christ, for example, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1), to offer a sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13:5).

C. The assurance comes from Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2: 6-8):

1) Those who believe in Jesus will not be put in shame.
(1 Peter 2: 6) God already gave us the assurance through Isaiah the prophet, in Isaiah 28:16. 2) Jesus Christ is chosen by God as the cornerstone of His Temple. In Him the whole structure is joined together and grows into God’s Temple. (1 Peter 2: 7, Ephesians 2:21-22) How precious Jesus is to us believers, but 3) those non-believers reject Him. God has already warned us through Isaiah the prophet in Isaiah 8:14 and Psalms 118:22 lets us know that the Israelites were the ones that didn’t believe Jesus is the Messiah. They rejected Him, and they didn’t obey God’s Words. So they were stumped by Jesus. However, God chose Jesus as the very head of the corner – the cornerstone.

3. Our status and mission (1 Peter 2: 9-10)

A. Our status: 1) a chosen race: We are chosen by God, not because we are good or precious by the worldly standard, but by God’s grace. He gave us the salvation and the everlasting life for free. 2) A royal Priesthood: We have the royal honor and the priesthood to serve God. 3) A holy nation: We obey God, and we serve Him. God’s will works freely among us. 4) God’s own people: We used to be gentiles that have no share of God’s kingdom. However, since God chose us, had mercy on us, set us aside and gave us the salvation, we are able to enter into God’s kingdom.

B. Our mission: We are chosen, and we have received many of God’s blessings, we should testify for Jesus, spread the news of the salvation that God gave us, so that others can also receive God’s blessings.

Discussion (Choose some of the following questions based on cell members’ needs):

1. How did your view of Christians change after you became a believer?
2. Why does the Lord want us to long for His Words? What impact did it make on your personal life?
3. What is the building material for the Temple? How is the building material built into the Temple?
4. How do you live out your status and mission in Christ?
5. What kind of growth did we experience after we moved to our current church building? How can we keep growing?

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, we praise you, and we thank you. Thank you for giving us Your Words, so that we can live by reading Your Words and obey Your will. Thank you, too, for giving us Jesus, who lives like a living stone, so that in Him as the cornerstone, the whole structure is joined together and grows into God’s Temple. Lord, may you help me always long for your Words, so that I can grow and join with other body parts to be built into the Temple to serve you. Thank you Jesus, we pray in Jesus’ precious name. Amen!

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

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