

## USING THE BIBLE IN TEAM MEETINGS

One of the important things for Local Ministry teams is to develop openness to God, to seek to be in tune with him and his vision for the church and its ministry. This can happen in many ways but if we recognise the Bible as God's word then we should expect God to be able to speak to us through it – to inspire, to encourage and to guide. Time for prayer and reflection should be an essential part of every team meeting.

In his book 'Transform your church with ministry teams' Stanley Ott encourages all ministry teams (which in his book means any teams carrying out particular ministries in a church, including a team taking overall responsibility for developing a church's vision – our 'Local Ministry teams') to begin each meeting with a time for 'Word-Share-Prayer'. Ten to fifteen minutes focuses on a passage of Scripture, followed by a time of sharing significant things happening in team members' lives followed by prayer. This is very close to the pattern of 'joining', giving everyone time to share news, and worship that we have encouraged teams to adopt.

The list of Bible passages suggested has been adapted from Stanley Ott's book. They are all fairly short and so can be used in the context of a time of reflection at the beginning of a meeting. Groups can use them in a variety of ways.

Writing things down before sharing can help sharpen thinking, particularly if you only have a short time for discussion.

1. Ott suggests providing a sheet with the Headings

- READ**           *(with the passage printed alongside)*
- REFLECT**       Jot down your insights
- RESPOND**       How will you apply the teachings of this text to your own life?
- REQUEST**       What prayer requests do you have?

Alternatively the sheet can have questions alongside each heading based on the passage.

He suggests giving everyone five minutes or so to reflect on the passage and jot down their ideas before sharing insights from the passage, and then sharing news before praying.

2. Another way is that known as the 'Swedish Method' of Bible Study where everyone is given a postcard with three symbols alongside which they can list a verse or a phrase from the passage:

- A CANDLE** – something which has brought new light and inspiration.
- AN ARROW** - something that has pricked your conscience, speaking to you personally, demanding a response or action
- A QUESTION MARK** – something you don't understand

3. You could give everyone a copy of the passage and ask them to mark the key phrases or to come up with a slogan or 'newspaper headline' to sum up the message of the passage.

If you don't want to use bits of paper you can:

**4. Read, reflect and respond** without writing anything down.

5. Whoever is leading the time could prepare just **two or three questions** to help discussion of the passage.

6. The leader could **comment on the key ideas from the passage** followed by silent reflection and prayer or discussion and prayer.

<b><i>Devotion to God</i></b>	
Joshua 1:6-9	Courage
Psalms 42:1-2	Longing for God
Psalms 130:5-8	Waiting for God
Jeremiah 29:11-14	Seeking God wholeheartedly
Matthew 6:33-34	Seeking first the kingdom of God
Matthew 7:24-27	Obedience
Acts 2:42-47	Devotion to fellowship and prayer
Romans 10:9-13	Confession of faith
Galatians 2:19-20	Living by faith

Ephesians 2:8-9	Grace
Ephesians 6:18-20	Praying in the Spirit
Philippians 2:5-11	Humility
I Thess. 5:16-22	Open to God
James 1:2-4	Perseverance
James 4:6-8	Resisting Satan
1 Peter 5:5-7	Humility
1 Peter 5:8-10	Being on the alert
Rev. 3:15-20	Christ knocking at the door

<b><i>Quiet Time</i></b> Personal bible reading & prayer	
Daniel 6:10-14	Daniel praying several times a day
1 John 1:9-2.2	Confession

Mark 1:35	Jesus going to a solitary place to pray
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<b><i>Fellowship</i></b>	
Psalms 133	Unity
Matthew 6:14-15	Forgiveness
John 13:34-35	Loving one another
John 17:20-23	Being one
Acts 2:42-47	Being devoted to fellowship
Acts 14:26-28	Sharing what God is doing

Romans 12:3-8	One body with many gifts
Romans 12:16-18	Living in peace with everyone
Ephesians 4:11-16	Gifts to build the body
2 Cor. 5:18-20	The ministry of reconciliation
Hebrews 10:24-25	Meeting together

***A Heart for Ministry to others***

Jeremiah 29:7	Vision for the city
Luke 4:16-21	Anointed to bring good news
Luke 19:1-10	Jesus singling out Zacchaeus
Luke 22:32	Strengthening the brethren
John 1:35-42	Jesus' first disciples
John 1:43-51	Jesus calling more disciples

John 21:15-17	Nurturing others in faith
Romans 12:4-8	Gifts of ministry
Galatians 4:19	Labouring to form Christ in others
2 Timothy 2:1-3	Passing the faith on to others
1 Peter 4:10-11	Using your gifts

***Being witnesses***

Matthew 5:13-16	Salt and light
Matthew 28:19-20	Making disciples of all nations
John 1:11-13	Christ's witness
Acts 1:8	Being Christ's witnesses

Acts 16:29-32	Witness of Paul and Silas
2 Timothy 2:1-3	Paul urging witness
1 Peter 3:15-16	Explaining the hope within
1 John 1:1-3	Witnessing to "what we have seen & heard"

***Prayer***

1 Chronicles 29:10-14	Praise and thanksgiving
Nehemiah 1:4-11	Confession, supplication
Matthew 6:9-13	The Lord's Prayer
Acts 4:29-31	Prayer for God to work wonders
Ephesians 1:15-23	Prayer to know God more fully

Ephesians 3:16-19	Prayer for inner strength
Colossians 1:9-12	Prayer to know God's will
Colossians 4:12	Prayer for spiritual maturity
1 Timothy 2:1-7	Prayer for those in authority

***Care***

Matthew 25:34-36	Compassion
Mark 1:40-42	Compassion for the sick
2 Cor. 1:3-4	Comforting those in affliction
Galatians 6:2	Bearing one another's burdens

1 Thessalonians 2:7-12	Caring like mother and father
1 Thessalonians 5:11-14	Encouraging one another
James 5:16	Confessing to and praying for one another
James 5:13-16	Anointing and praying for healing

<b><i>God's Word</i></b>	
Psalms 19:7-10	God's word is sweeter than honey
Psalms 119:105	God's word is a light to my path
Isaiah 55:11	God's word will not return empty
Jeremiah 23:29	God's word is like fire

1 Thessalonians 2:13	God's word works in those who believe
2 Timothy 3:16-17	The word of God is inspired
Hebrews 4:12	The word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword

<b><i>"With Me"</i></b>	
Psalms 23:4	God with me
Matthew 1:23	Basis of "with me": God with us
Matthew 9:9	"Follow me" = come with me
Mark 3:14	The "with me" principle
Acts 11:22-26	Paul called to work with Barnabas

Acts 13:1	"prophets & teachers": the ministry team
Acts 20:1-6	Paul and "the magnificent seven": the ministry team
Romans 16:1-6	Network of relationships: "with me" in friendship
1 Peter 4:9	Hospitality: "with me" in my home & life

<b><i>Send</i></b>	
Isaiah 6:8	"Send me!"
Matthew 9:38	Prayers for workers to be sent in mission
Matthew 10:5	Jesus sending the Twelve
Mark 11:1-3	Jesus sending by twos

Luke 10:2-3	Labourers for the harvest
John 20:21	"I am sending you"
Acts 13:2-4	Barnabas and Paul sent