

cell notes

A meeting of your cell community has four connected elements – **Welcome, Word, Worship, Witness.**

Luke 16v16-18v8 Authentic Spirituality is for those who have faith in King Jesus

Welcome

Introduce the meeting. Get to know each other. Share with each other stories from doing mission in the last week. What needs are there for prayer for peoples friends? How can you support each other as you seek to **live for Jesus** and **speak for Jesus**.

Word

Pray. Read the passage in three sections.

16v16-31 THE FORMER REVELATION

What do we learn about the OT from v16-18?
What does the parable (19-31) teach us about the OT?

What response is required? (3 things in 29-31)

Summary - How must we respond to what God has already revealed?

17v1-19 THE FAITH REQUIRED

What does Jesus teach in v1-4?
How might this raise the question in v5?
When it comes to faith what matters? (5-6)
Does that encourage us?
How does v7-11 describe faith in action?
What is notable about the response of the cleansed leper who returns (v15-18)?

Summary - What does real faith look like?

17v20-18v8 THE FUTURE REVELATION

What have we previously seen about the kingdom of God?

How does Jesus respond to the pharisees question about it?

What connection does Jesus make between himself and the Kingdom of God in v21, 23?

What will disciples experience as they wait for Jesus' coming? (22-29)

What will happen on the day the Son of Man is revealed?

What is the main point of the parable in 18v1-8?

What will happen when the final revelation of King Jesus happens? (8a)

What will Jesus be looking for when he comes?

Summary - Who will get eternal life when King Jesus returns?

How can we cultivate the kind of faith the King seeks?

Worship (10mins)

Respond in prayer and praise to what you've studied.

Next Week (Week 9) > Luke 18v9-19v27

Week 10 > Cell Invitation Event

Witness (30mins)

Plan details of your Cell Invitation Event in weeks 10. Think about how you can make use of the CU Carol Service.

Pray for non-Christian friends you can invite to these things, and for people you want to bring God's revelation to.

word notes

16v16-31. The Former Revelation...listen, be convinced and repent.

Jesus begins by teaching about the Old Testament. In v16, he says that the law and the prophets were proclaimed until John. Since then the Kingdom of God is being preached and everyone is forcing his way into it. There has been a revelation of God previously, and that revelation is superseded by the revelation of the Kingdom of God. We might think that this means the Old Testament can be got rid of. But Jesus says it still stands. And he states an example of scripture still standing. God has revealed himself.

We're then told a parable with vivid images, two men – one in hell, one in heaven. A great divide between them. They can't cross it. The man in hell pleads that the man in heaven, Lazarus, be allowed to return from the dead to tell his family about the reality of life after death. We should note that this isn't actually teaching us about the reality of heaven and hell. Rather, the parable is teaching us through the words of Abraham in v29-31. Abraham says that his family have Moses and the Prophets. They need to listen to them. If they won't then a resurrected man will not convince them. The message – God has revealed himself already enough. The right way to respond to that is to Listen, be Convinced and Repent. It doesn't work to say that we need a bit more revelation – what God has revealed is enough.

17v1-19. The Faith Required...not quantity, but an appropriate, thankful response to Jesus

Jesus then turns to some hard teaching about sin, causing others to sin and forgiving those who sin against you. There is a challenge to us to view sin seriously from this. When did we last rebuke someone who sinned against us... when did we last receive a rebuke and then repent, rather than defend ourselves. The cross allows us to receive all critique – God has more on us than anyone else.

Whilst we shouldn't ride over this teaching its point comes in the question of v5. The apostles ask Jesus "increase our faith!". They think they don't have the faith to do this. Jesus' response, in v6, is quantity of faith is not the point. Faith is not some abstract thing that you need a certain amount of. A mustard seed of faith can do what we'd consider impossible. Be encouraged, you have enough faith already!

He then teaches with a story of a servant, in v7-11. Here faith is illustrated as the appropriate response to Jesus. The image is the duty of a servant. We should not read too much into the details of this, but rather consider it an illustration (v7, suppose) where the servant acts appropriately in his situation.

Finally in this section we're told of the story of 10 lepers healed by Jesus. They're all cleansed. Only one returns to praise God. Jesus says his faith healed him. It's notable that his faith is directed towards Jesus and that he gives thanks to God. We might also note that he is a foreigner. This story teaches us that faith is focussed on Jesus – and gives praise to God. Again, faith is not an abstract thing – it is inextricably connected to Jesus.

17v-20-18v8. The Future Revelation...King Jesus will come, will he find faith..

A pharisee asks Jesus when the kingdom will come. He says it's not with careful observation. Not something you can use to say "here it is" or "there it is". You can't do this because the kingdom is within you. Or more accurately, the kingdom is among you. Note that this is the second kingdom reference of the section – 16v16. The Kingdom of God is Jesus' message.

As Jesus goes on to teach his disciples about life before his Kingdom fully comes he teaches them that they will long for his coming. When Jesus calls himself Son of Man he uses a kingly title. Then he says, in the meantime there will be rumours of his coming. People will say "here he is" or "there he is". The language of v21 is repeated in v23 but changed. The kingdom replaced with Jesus. The two are not completely interchangeable but they are very strongly connected. We cannot speak of the Kingdom of God without connection to Jesus. It's coming always means the coming of the rule of King Jesus in people's lives. This is a sharp corrective to some views that the kingdom comes through social transformation. The kingdom is about people coming under the personal rule of King Jesus.

It won't be a rumoured coming because when Jesus comes he will be revealed like sheet lightning. Everyone will see him. Without doubt. Before that Jesus must suffer and be rejected. In the meantime life will go on as it did in the days of Noah and before the judgement of Sodom. When Jesus is revealed there will be no turning back. Judgement will come and take people away if they turn back.

This section continues with the parable of a persistent widow in 18v1-8. She is persistent with an unjust judge who gives into her eventually. Jesus then argues lesser to greater in relation to God. God is a just judge, will he not give his chosen ones justice. God's people will be delivered into the kingdom. However, v8, the question is – when Jesus, the Son of Man, the King comes will he find faith? Faith not marked by quantity but by a repentant response to the revelation of Jesus today.

Summary --- 16v16-18v8 --- **A former revelation of God in the Old ^(16v16a) and New Testaments ^(16v16b) has been preached. We need to respond to that now by listening, being convinced and repenting ^(16v29-31). Real faith isn't about quantity ^(17v5-6) but the object of that faith ^(17v18). It needs to be in Jesus, expressed in praise to God. This is important because there will be a future revelation of Jesus. He will be revealed to everyone who has God's King, the Son of Man ^(17v24). He will come in judgement ^(17v33-35) and he will be looking for those who have faith in him ^(18v8). In view of this we should urgently ensure we have repented and believed in the crucified King ^(17v25) who saves us from judgement. We should take sin seriously ^(17v1-4) and we should pray for Jesus to come and judge the world ^(18v8).**