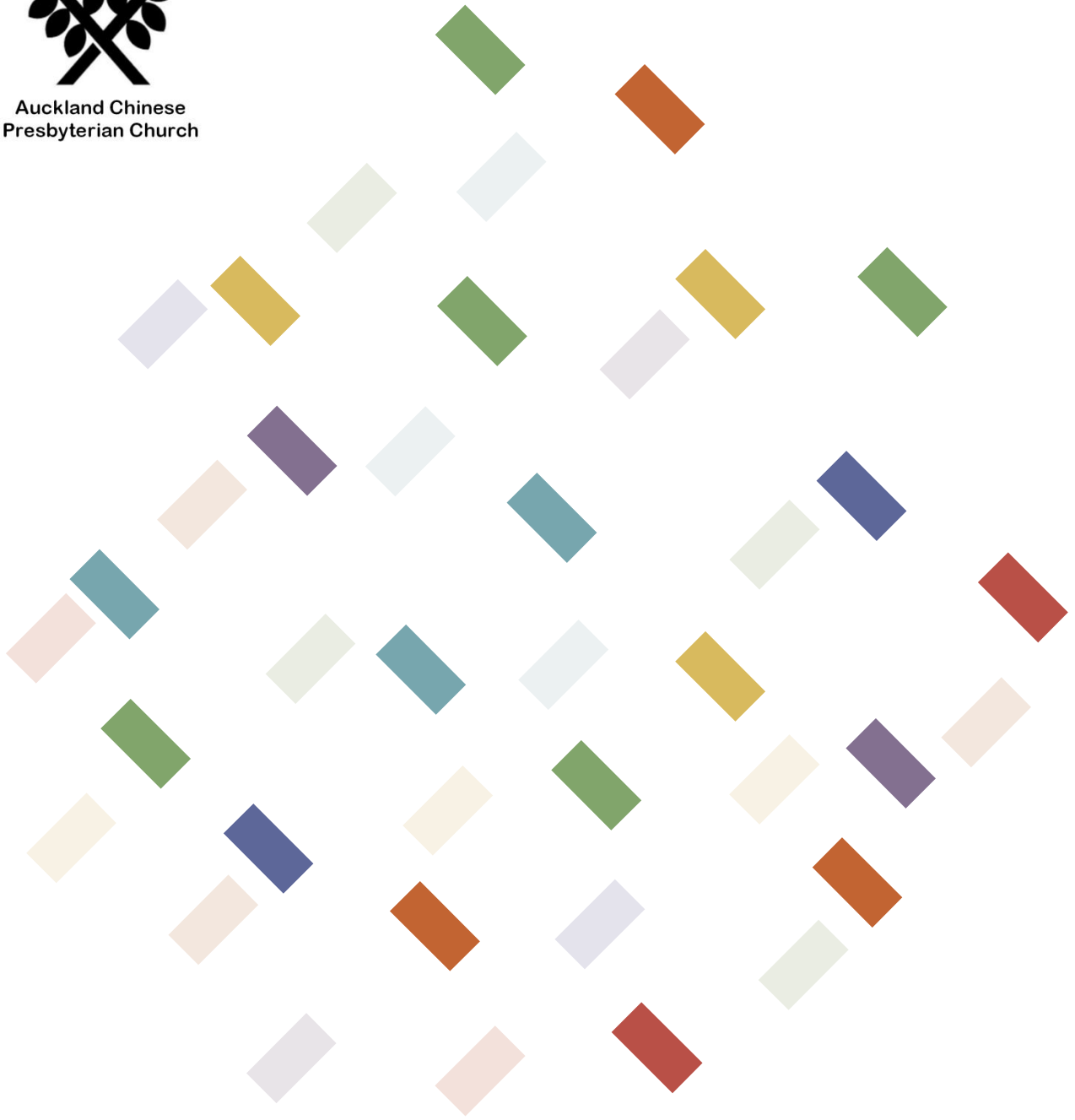




Auckland Chinese
Presbyterian Church



LIFE DIMENSIONS

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Based on The Academy of Life, St George's Church, Leeds, UK

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INTRODUCTION

TRUE LIFE

Live God's Word

SHARED LIFE

Love God's people

PURE LIFE

Walk in God's freedom

DEEP LIFE

Rooted in God's love

FULL LIFE

Receive God's Spirit

SERVING LIFE

A channel for God's blessing

BOLD LIFE

Witness to God's kingdom

Can we live like Jesus - really? On a day to day basis? That is exactly what Jesus offered: *"I am the way the truth and the life"; "I have come that they may have life"; "whoever believes in me will do the things I have been doing - even greater things!"* Jesus not only showed what God's life looks like but he also gave it to us as a gift by dying for us.

The seven Life Dimensions are seven ways we can live as disciples of Christ. First we look at Jesus and all God's given us through him; then we examine the seven dimensions and finally we commit to growing in these seven dimensions.

Please attend or listen to the message for the Sunday before your group study. There will also be outlines available each week. May you be richly blessed as you take this journey with us!

How would you summarise what True Life is?

Can you see examples of True Life in Jesus' life and in your own life?

What have you already learned about how to feed on the Scriptures?

A crucial part of growing with God is feeding daily on God's Word. Each week fourteen passages are provided in this booklet for groups that meet fortnightly. Groups that meet weekly might want to take seven of the passages.

Each week can you commit to:

Read the passages

- Spend time reflecting on the meaning, for instance, by meditating the words, writing your reflections in a journal or committing some of them to memory
- Put what you learn into practice in the way you pray, think and live

TRUE LIFE DAILY READINGS

The truth about God

Psalm 103:8-12 | Matt 6:28-33 | Rom 8:31-38 | 1 John 4:7-12

The truth about God's people

John 15:5-8 | Eph 1:3-10 | Gal 2:20 | 3:26-28

The truth about God's kingdom

Mat 5:3-10, 19:28-30 | 1 Cor 7:29-31 | Rom 8:18-25

Spend some time looking closely at Matt 5:3-10. What could it mean to live these words in the coming days? (For this exercise, don't focus on questions about the passage. Focus on how you can practically live out the parts that make sense to you).

Can you commit to read, reflect and put into practice each passage in the True Life Daily Readings? Are there any other ways you can commit to True Life before you meet again?

How would you summarise what Shared Life is?

Can you see examples of Shared Life in Jesus' life and in your own life?

Look at Acts 2:41-47. What signs of Shared Life do you see in this account?

Get practical. How would you rate your group for having Open Doors, Open Hearts and Open Hands? What can you practically do to share life more as a group?

Using the space below each person can make a Shared Life list. Who can you welcome? Who do you need to forgive or ask forgiveness from? Who can you help practically? Report back next time.

SHARED LIFE DAILY READINGS

The Shared Life of Jesus

Matt 9:9-13 | 18:1-14 | 18:15-20 | 18:21-35 | Luke
14:1-14

Shared Life in the Church

Acts 2:42-47 & 4:32-37 | Rom 12:9-21 | 14:1-18 | Eph
2:11-22 | 4:17-28 | 4:29-5:21
Heb 13:1-8 | Jas 2:1-13 | 1 John 3:11-18

How would you summarise what Pure Life is?

Can you see examples of Pure Life in Jesus' life and in your own life?

On the next page, look at the Pure Life lists.

Use this as a private moment to let the Holy Spirit convict you of sin.

Take some time to repent together and pray for each other. You can do this by sharing one or two items on this list which apply to you. Begin by recognising and repenting of these in prayer. Then those who are praying with you can pray for God's wisdom as you seek to replace this sinful pattern in your life.

How do you feel about being accountable to someone on a regular basis?

Who might that person be? Could you do something this week to make this happen?

SINFUL PASSIVITY

Insecurity	I fear for myself/ my loved ones	I get paralysed by worry	I doubt God's provision	I often don't feel safe
Shame	I feel unworthy of God's favour & love	I fear unexpected embarrassment	I draw back from being known	I keep secrets from supportive friends
Hopelessness	I often despair about my future	I often speak negative & cynical words	I frequently imagine terrible things	Nothing good is to come from my life
Self-hate	I dislike myself/ my name/my life	I expect others to reject me	I deliberately damage my body / humiliate myself	I often wish I was someone else
Self Pity	I often dwell on my failures	God has been unfair to me	I feel no one understands me at all	I constantly struggle with hurts & rejections
People- Pleasing	I draw back from confronting others	I hate to let other people down	I depend too much on certain relationships	I seldom witness to my faith
Hesitancy	I am afraid to commit myself	I miss opportunities God has for me	I'm frozen by the idea I will miss God's 'will'	I delay and avoid rather than do what is right
Inferiority	I often feel I am simply not good enough	I draw back from new opportunities	I don't accept compliments	I admire others too much & don't offer myself
Complacen-cy	My main concern is career/family /security	My life is little different from non-believers	I always have & expect more than I need	I steer clear of significant giving & hospitality
Unbelief	I draw back from the promises of God	I refuse to act unless I have total proof	I hide behind complicated arguments	I rarely take risks in my faith
Bitterness / Unforgiveness	I frequently recall hurts done to me	I cannot move on from the past	I resent certain people	I rarely say sorry & offer forgiveness

PURE LIFE DAILY READINGS

Psalm 51 | Prov 12 | Matt 5:17-48 | Luke 7:36-50 |
 11:37-54 | John 7:53-8:11 | Rom 6:1-23 | 1 Cor
 10:1-13 | Eph 4:17-5:2 | 5:3-20 | Tit 2:11-3:8 | Heb
 12:1-17

SINFUL AGGRESSION

Competition	I seek to outdo others & prove myself	I often compare myself with others	I am driven to succeed at all times	I find failure or threat of failure devastating
Unteachability	I know better than most other people	People think I am stubborn	Hearing from God rarely changes the way I act	I pay little attention to the words of others
Critical Spirit	Things are rarely good enough for me	I am critical of people who hold responsibility	I often see the negative	I make jokes at other people's expense & criticise in public
Ambition	It is important that I am widely recognised	I make detailed 10-year plans	I'm frequently frustrated when others delay me	I live in the future not the present
Entitlement	I have the right to say no to God	I cannot grow unless I have everything I want	I have the right to choose how I use my time & resources	I expect a certain standard of living
Attention-Seeking	I find myself dominating conversations	I feel cross or insecure if I am not noticed	I get withdrawn if I have unmet expectations	If I have something to say it must be said
Self-Sufficiency	I don't need other people	I seldom pray & ask for help	I struggle to work in a team	I often find others disappoint or frustrate me
Greed	I have what I need but it's not enough	I dream of a luxury lifestyle	I resent invitations to give	Serving the poor is not significant in my life
Lust	I habitually rate others according to appearance	I cultivate sexual images in my mind / using technology	I engage in sexual fantasy/activity that isn't godly	I flirt with others or dismiss them if unattractive
Control	I can't relax if I don't have all the information	Others always know when I disapprove	I feel I know what is best for people	I have a hard time accepting other's judgments
Anger	I exhibit sudden rage/outbursts/abusive behaviour	I get wound up easily & show impatience	I respond fiercely to criticism	I'm quietly critical of others in my thoughts

How would you summarise what Deep Life is?

Can you see examples of Deep Life in Jesus' life and in your own life?

What have you learned already about how to pray?

	Daily	Weekly	Seasonal - Monthly, Quarterly or in Season
Time with God			
Shared Life with God's Family			
Other Key Relationships			
Physical Exercise			
Sleep, Rest & Recreation			

Using the table on the previous page, spend some time filling out a 'Rule of Life'. What would you like your habits to be in each area?

Share together what this exercise has shown you. What can you commit to do next?

Time to pray and reflect as a group.

DEEP LIFE DAILY READINGS

Deep Life and the Psalms

Psalms 23 | 63 | 131 | 139 | 145

Jesus and Deep Life

Luke 4:1-13 | 11:1-13 | 18:1-14 | 22:39-46

Deep Life in the New Testament

Rom 8:14-27; 2 Cor 1:3-11 | 12:1-10 | Eph 3:14-21 |

Phil 4:4-9

How would you summarise what Full Life is?

Can you see examples of Full Life in Jesus' life and in your own life?

What experience do you have of being filled with the Holy Spirit?

Read out 1 Cor 12:7-11 and Rom 12:6-8. Have you been given any of these gifts? Are there any gifts you would like to ask for?

FULL LIFE DAILY READINGS

14 Acts of the Spirit

Luke 5:12-15 | 5:17-26 | 7:1-17 | 8:40-56 | 10:1-24 |
24:1-12

Acts 2:1-11 | 3:1-10 | 4:1-3 | 4:32-37; 6 | 9:1-19 |
12:25-13:3 | 19:1-22

Take a look at the Full Life Daily Readings. Can you commit to read these passages, and each day to act on anything you feel the Spirit is saying? Next time you meet, feedback any stories you have to share about this.

Take turns to pray for each other, one by one. You may need to be in smaller groups to make sure everyone can be prayed for. Ask for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on each person. Speak out any words or Scriptures that could be from God (you might also write these down for the person).

How would you summarise what Serving Life is?

Can you see examples of Serving Life in Jesus' life and in your own life?

What does it mean to serve out of riches?

Make a list of the things are you most thankful for in your life (include financial, possessions, skills).

SERVING LIFE DAILY READINGS

Serving Life in the Old Testament
Deut 15:1-11 | Isa 58 | Amos 5:1-17

Jesus and Service
Luke 4:14-30 | Matt 20:20-28 | 25:1-30 | 25:31-46

Serving Life in the New Testament
Rom 12:1-8 | 2 Cor 8 | 9 | Gal 6:1-10 | 1 Tim 6:6-19 |
Heb 13:1-8 | Jas 2:1-13

Take turns to review your lists, what does it mean for you to serve with what you have been given? How can you use these gifts to bless those who are poor?

Pray for each other and listen for guidance from God. Are there gifts God wants to give? Are there ways God is calling this person to serve?

How would you summarise what Bold Life is?

Can you see examples of Bold Life in Jesus' life and in your own life?

Take it in turns to tell a short story (e.g. 2 minute) of how you came to faith and the difference Jesus has made to you.

As an individual, where and to whom have you been sent?

Can you recognise the people you are sent to as an individual?
As a group, do you recognise certain people or groups that you are sent to? What does it mean for you to sow kingdom seeds among these people?

Ask God for opportunities to listen to others and share your story.

Plan a Review session (see next page) where you can tell stories of putting Life Dimensions into practice.

BOLD LIFE DAILY READINGS

Bold Life in Jesus

Mark 1:14-20 | Luke 5:27-31 | 10:1-24 | 13:31-35 | 15:1-10 | Matt 28:16-20 | John 20:19-31

Bold Life in the New Testament

Acts 4:1-31 | 16:11-40 | 17:1-15 | Rom 10:1-21 | 15:14-33 | 2 Cor 5:11-6:2

REVIEW

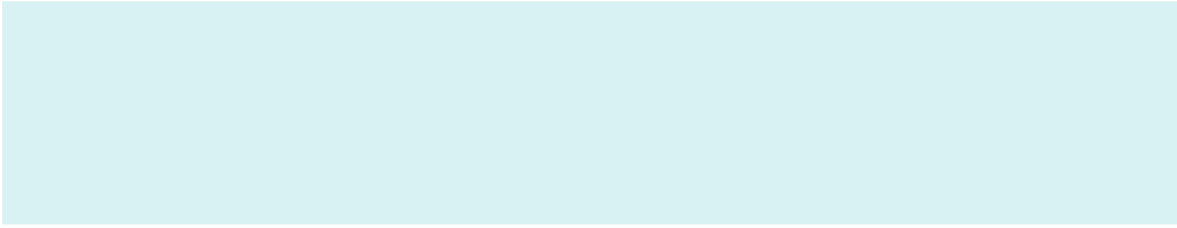
Life Dimensions are about God's life in action through his people. One of the best ways to reflect on this is to tell stories of stepping out to do something (great or small) and sharing what God brought about as a result. Go through each dimension. Who can explain how this dimension works? Who can give a personal example of this dimension at work? (There may be several examples for each one.)

TRUE LIFE

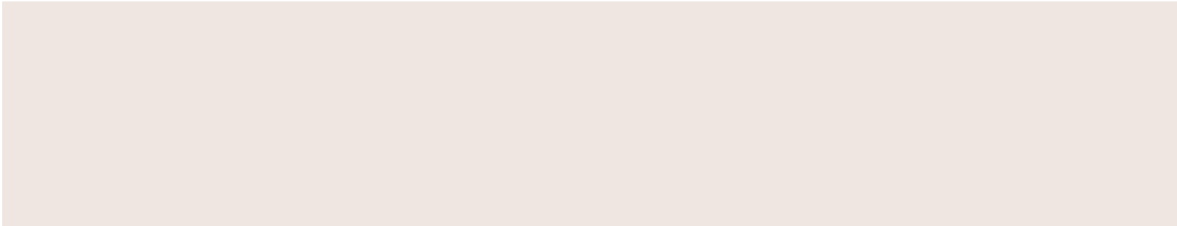
SHARING LIFE

PURE LIFE

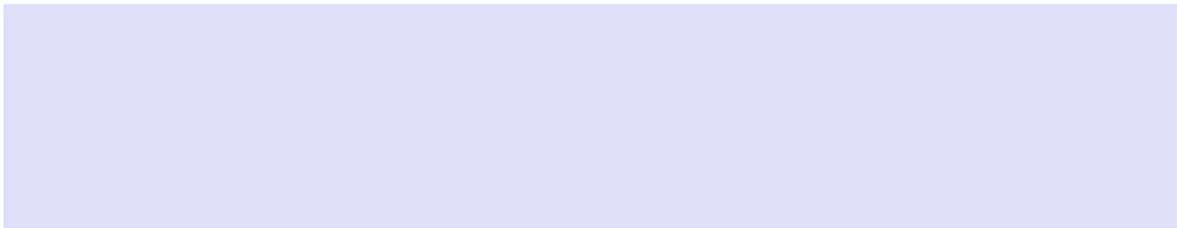
DEEP LIFE



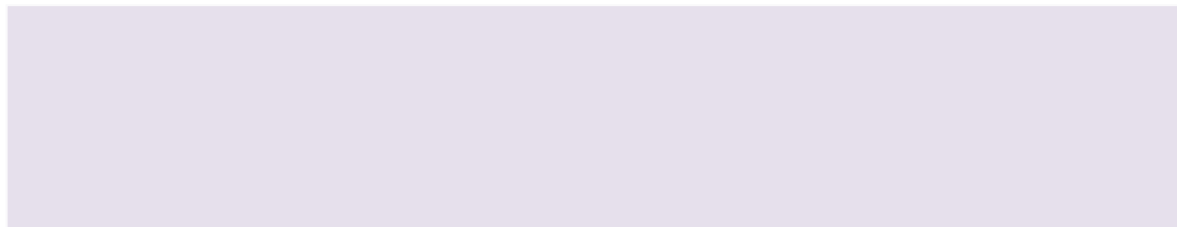
FULL LIFE



SERVING LIFE



BOLD LIFE



What does it mean for you to continue growing in what you've learned in recent weeks?

Pray for each other.

It is quite clear that the holiness of every individual Christian is a community project. We don't become more Christ-like on our own but rather as part of His family.

As we seek to become more like Jesus we will need people to ask the right sorts of questions and hold us to account. On the next couple pages are a number of questions that we can use for this purpose – some for individuals and some for groups. They can work well in team meetings, in mentoring relationships, in marriage & in all sorts of other contexts.

ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

TRUE LIFE

Am I secure in the Father's love?
 Am I relying on myself or on Jesus?
 Am I living for the kingdom?
 How is God teaching me through the Scriptures?

SHARED LIFE

How is God blessing me through others?
 Am I sharing my life with my small group? How are my relationships with family and friends?
 Am I showing hospitality?
 Is there anyone I need to forgive?
 Is there anyone whose forgiveness I need?

PURE LIFE

Is fear or anxiety holding me back?
 Am I seeking to grasp or control more than God has for me?
 Am I stuck in any sinful patterns?
 When was I last accountable to someone?

DEEP LIFE

Am I too busy? Is time a blessing or a curse?
 Are the rhythms of my life healthy?

(Eating and sleeping, working and resting, celebration and retreat)

Am I allowing God the space to draw me near to him?

Am I in a time of pruning? Can I see God at work in it?

FULL LIFE

Do I ask for the Holy Spirit's help?
 How is the Holy Spirit leading me?
 Do I lack any fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5)?
 Am I using and developing my spiritual gifts?

SERVING LIFE

How am I experiencing the generosity of God?
 Am I serving freely and faithfully?
 Am I blessing the poor?
 Am I living for the approval of God or others?

BOLD LIFE

What kingdom prayers is God giving me?
 Who is God leading me to (Luke 10:6)?
 How am I demonstrating the signs of the kingdom?
 Where do I face opposition or need to be bold?

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

TRUE LIFE

Are we coming to know the Bible and living out its message?
 Is our group centered on Christ?

SHARED LIFE

Are there open doors (welcome, hospitality, honour)?
 Are there open hearts (honesty, forgiveness, prayer)?
 Are there open hands (practical generosity, financial giving, shared tasks)?

PURE LIFE

Are we in accountable relationships?
 Are we facing up to sin and being released into new life?

DEEP LIFE

What is the depth of our prayer life?
 How is God at work through our suffering?

FULL LIFE

What are the signs of us being filled, led and empowered by the Spirit?
 Are we exercising our gifts: in church life and our wider communities?

SERVING LIFE

Are we each discovering our callings?
 Who is being liberated and blessed through us?

BOLD LIFE

Is our group outward-looking? Who are we seeking to reach?
 How are we demonstrating the kingdom? Who is coming to faith in Jesus?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Whilst the material is based on the Bible it has also been inspired by the work of Richard Foster (Streams of Living Water) and Dallas Willard (Divine Conspiracy) to name but two sources and has been taught and fine-tuned among the people of St George's, Leeds.

Consider these five challenges to baptism candidates at St George's and answer them truthfully for yourself as a reminder of the commitment you make to following Jesus:

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people, loving your neighbour as yourself?

Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society, by prayer for the world and its leaders, by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?