**Small Groups Material - Week 1**

**Christ at the Centre**

**Welcome** (15 mins)

Can you remember something you really, really wanted as a child? Did you get it? What did you have to do to get it?

**Worship** (10 - 15 mins)

Ask everyone to find a verse in the Psalms which either expresses longing for God or how the Lord meets the needs of his people.

Then, go round in the circle with each person reading out their verse and saying a short prayer based on that afterwards.

After this, you might like to stand and sing ‘Faithful One’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxviwvjyg1w> *(Hint: turn it up nice and loud so that people don’t feel shy singing up)* and you could follow that with some open praise.

**Word** (40 - 45 mins)

**Read Matthew 10. 46 - 52**

1. *Beggars often waited along roads near cities because that was where they could contact most people.* Imagine yourself in Bartimaeus’ shoes that day. Describe what it must have been like for him (ie. sounds, smells, other sensations). How did he respond - and why?

2. *Despite the teaching to care for the needy (Lev 25.35 - 38), people ignored their responsibility.* What were the different ways people in this crowd reacted to Bartimaeus?

3. Why did Jesus respond as he did?

4. What words would you use to describe Bartimaeus’ faith? What would help your faith become more like his?

5. In what ways was Bartimaeus’ encounter with Jesus life-changing?

How can our small group help us to encounter Jesus? Be life-changing?

6. (Optional) We don’t know what happened to Bartimaeus in the rest of his life. Did he continue to follow Jesus? **Read Colossians 2. 6 - 7.** How can our small group help us to ‘continue to live in him’?

**Witness** (15 mins)

Imagine the effect of Bartimaeus’ healing on his family and friends. Have you stories of encounters with Jesus (think much wider than healings)? How do you encounter Jesus in your daily life? Then, pray for opportunities to share testimony with non-Christian friends.