

CHRIS KILBY

EQUIPPED

Gearing yourself up for
the plans of God



STUDY GUIDE

Equipped small group notes

As a fellow leader and close friend of Chris Kilby, I have been personally challenged by his excellent book 'Equipped'. The most poignant aspect is this: this is not a book for Chris Kilby, this is a way of life. Chris really does 'walk the walk'. Life Church have devoted a term to go through the book together chapter by chapter in small groups. The hope and prayer is that an army of disciples who are equipped, ready and willing to share the gospel in and out of season is raised up.

Pete Clayton

This resource is designed to complement the Equipped book. To get the most out of this resource, we recommend going through it in a life group but do attempt to do the questions and study before gathering together. Therefore, please endeavour to read the chapter or listen to that week's talk and answer the questions as best as you can before attending life group each week. However, please don't let it stop you attending life group if you have not had a chance – you will still get plenty out of the group.

Finally, a note to Life Group leaders. This resource is reasonably thorough and at points personal. Consequently, when gathering as life group and studying together, please pull out what you feel are the most pertinent sections and questions rather than trying to cover the whole study on each occasion.

We hope and pray you are inspired, encouraged, provoked and blessed through the course of this study and as you apply it to your daily life.

On behalf of all the team at Life Church Southampton.

Chapter 1 - Equipped as a Sent Servant

Chris opens the book with the search for genuine heroes. When you think of heroes in the faith, who do you think of and why?

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My mind immediately drifts to Jackie Pullinger and James Hudson Taylor. Two missionaries that have taken the call of God so seriously that they have given up home comforts to move to unknown and largely unreached people groups for Jesus at the time. Jackie Pullinger has been pioneering an incredible work in Hong Kong in the walled city while James Hudson Taylor was known for his founding role in establishing the china inland mission in 1865 after he had sailed to China at just 21 years of age.

Chris introduced us to a central new testament example in the area of mission, the apostle Paul. Paul is an outstanding example of a witness for Jesus. He goes from persecuting Christians to being the lead missionary to the gentiles. Chris references Paul's introduction to the church in Rome as both servant **and** slave for Christ, as well as an apostle.

Q1. In the context in first century Rome what does Paul mean by being a 'slave for Christ'?

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Q2. What does it mean for you to view yourself as a slave for Christ?

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Q3. How does this sit alongside being an adopted child of God? (Romans 8v14)

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Q4. In your thinking and in your life, what is the balance of slave and child – how does this practically work out for you day to day?

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Chris refers to the resultant ‘obedience’ battle of being a slave for Christ. We have no choice but to tell people the good news of Jesus. However, many “abdicate this tremendous privilege to partner with God in reaching a lost world with his good news”.

He challenges us with this blunt statement; “When you make the choice to be obedient to your new master, you grow, and so does his kingdom”.

Q5. Who was the last person who is not yet a Christian about your faith?

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Q6. Is the frequency of your gospel-based conversations something that reflects the centrality of your faith in your life?

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Q7. What one area of your life could you change to allow more opportunity to share the ‘good news’ of Jesus Christ?

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Chris goes onto unpack the term ‘apostle’. Apostle literally meaning ‘sent one’ and referring to one who represents Jesus.

Look up Ephesians 4v11 – 14. Read through the list of 5-fold ministry gifts.

Q8. How do you understand each one of these gifts operating at a local church level?

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Q9. Of the 5-fold gifts listed, are there any that you feel:

a) You have personally felt the most benefit from?

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b) You have less experience of seeing used effectively on either an individual or a church level?

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To the church in Corinth, Paul tells them to imitate him as he imitates Christ (1 Corinthians 11v1). How are you going to choose to follow Paul’s example of sharing your faith this week?

Pray together as a group. Ask for God to give you opportunities and pray that the “eyes of your heart may be enlightened” (Ephesians 1v18) as you go about your week. Pray that you would be aware of God’s presence and that when you next gather together, you will have stories to share with one another.

Chapter 2 - Equipped with a Precious Message

In chapter 2 Chris goes onto to explain the precious nature of the gospel. In comparing the gospel to the multi-faceted 'koh-i-noor' diamond he emphasises how from every angle the gospel is a precious beautiful message.

The experience of most believers is that we often don't express the gospel with the same confidence that scripture does.

Specifically, 5 facets were focused on;

#1 the gospel is pure Chris focuses on the fact that the gospel was not developed by Paul or the early disciples, but that "God was the first evangelist". God invented the gospel and it is pure and perfect.

Q1. Try and write down in a short paragraph a summary of the what the gospel message is. (when you join as a group compare answers and pull out key points).

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Q2. When you communicate the gospel – what are your personal concerns?

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Chris expands on the careful balance between the parallel truths of being true to the message of the bible and being aware of the sensibilities of culture.

Q3. Are you someone who is more like to compromise on biblical truth not to offend or to offend without being aware of the sensibilities of the culture? What efforts can you make to re-dress your balance?

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#2 the gospel is attractive Equipped reminds us of the awesomeness of the gospel and the sheer attractiveness because of the beauty and majesty of Jesus Christ – at the centre of the gospel.

“The gospel is supremely attractive, because no other figure ever has been, or ever will be, more dazzling than Jesus”

Q4. How attractively do you view the gospel? Does it amaze and astound? Or has it grown familiar and routine? (if the latter spend some time praying and asking God to refresh your love and zeal for him).

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Q5. How do you present the gospel attractively to others? Are there times/contexts that seem more effective for you?

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#3 the gospel is priceless as Chris states “one in one of us will be affected by sin”. Chris describes the gospel as ‘God’s antidote to sin’. The gospel leads to life, whereas sin leads to death.

Q6. What scripture could you find to support this statement?

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Q7. How do you demonstrate your gratitude to God for the transforming work of the gospel in your life on a daily basis?

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#4 the gospel is hard the gospel cuts through the depth and layers of our sin. The gospel cuts through with truth and brings total transformation.

Q8. In what areas of your life are you still living in slavery to sin, rather than the freedom the gospel can bring?

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Repent and ask God to help you overcome these areas. Remind yourself of the truth that the gospel is hard and powerful and the truth of the gospel can set you free (john 8v32).

#5 the gospel has a setting the setting for the gospel to be shared is primarily through the local church. Chris challenges us that everything we do as local churches must be rooted in the truth and have opportunity to express the truth.

Q9. In what areas of church are you presently involved? Do they have a gospel motive? What could make them more gospel-centred?

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Pray as a group that you would be reminded of the preciousness of the message. That you would see it as precious, as a “pearl of great worth” (Matthew 12v44-45) as Jesus describes it. If needs be, repent of being ‘neutral’ to the gospel.

Chapter 3 – Equipped with a Missionary Heart

Chris opens chapter 3 hitting ‘head-on’ the call for all of us to be evangelists. He stresses it is not an optional extra when we look at it through a biblical lens. However, he also highlights the very real fear and challenge it can represent to us.

Q1. The caricatures of the ‘Rottweiler’ and the ‘bible stuffer’ that Chris highlights are ones we all want to avoid. Does fear of being perceived like this prevent you sharing your faith?

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Chris goes on to unpack Paul’s attitude to evangelism in Romans 1v11-17.

Attitude #1 eagerness Paul was incredibly eager to share the gospel (Romans1v15). Chris highlights 4 things that helped Paul stay eager.

Q2. Firstly, Paul delighted in his salvation. Write down a summary of your salvation story, reminding yourself of how God drew you to himself. Then spend a few minutes thanking God for it.

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Q2. Secondly, Paul was full of the Holy Spirit. Are you baptised in the spirit? If not read Luke 11v9-13 and ask God to fill you with his Holy Spirit. Perhaps discuss this with your life group leader. If so, when was the last time you were aware of his presence?

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Thirdly, Chris emphasises Paul’s eternal perspective. What he calls ‘the lostness of the lost’. Hell is real and frightful. This alone should give us an eagerness with the gospel.

Q3. Do you dwell on eternity? Does this give you a sense of urgency with the gospel?

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Q4. Finally – Chris explains the ‘toaster-bag principle’. We share what we are passionate about. What are you passionate about? Do others know this?

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Attitude #2 inclusivity- simply put the gospel is for everyone.

Q5. Who do you find easiest to reach with the gospel?

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Q6. What one practical step can you take this week to cross a cultural / demographic barrier to reach someone different with the gospel?

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Attitude #3 obligated- the gospel is ‘good news’. You bring hope to a hopeless situation. You bring life when death looms. Just like Paul, you are obligated to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Q7. Do you see sharing the gospel as your ‘duty’? When is the last time you discharged your ‘duty’? If you can’t recall, pray for opportunity and seek out a chance to share your faith – God will often present one if we ask!

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Attitude #4 unashamed- the fact that Paul reminds Timothy not to be ashamed of the gospel, is perhaps a reminder to us that there was obviously the temptation to feel ashamed of the gospel (2 Timothy 1v8). However, as Paul says in Romans 1v16 – the gospel is the power of God for salvation.

Q8. Can you sometimes feel embarrassed or like a nuisance when sharing the gospel? What one step can you take to overcome this?

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Chapter 4 – Equipped on Your Knees

‘talk to Jesus about your neighbours before your talk to your neighbours about Jesus’

Chris opens this chapter telling the story of him leading the ‘breakdown driver to Jesus following a prayer. He emphasises the necessity of prayer if you genuinely want to reach people for Jesus.

Q1. Can you recall any stories of gospel breakthrough that have happened in your life over the years? Were they linked to prayer?

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Often we will feel discontent in our gospel fruit. But do we wrestle with the same discontent with our prayer lives. This is where fruit is birthed. As Paul writes to the church in Colossae – “devote yourself to prayer, being watchful and thankful”.

Q2. Are you devoted to daily praying for opportunities to share your faith?

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Chris encouraged us, to turn off our screens and phones and find a quiet place to pray. (Matthew 6v6).

Q3. Is this something you do? If not how and when could you feasibly start doing this? Plan the details and specifics.

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Q4. Following reading this chapter what would you say is the ‘purpose of prayer’ in your evangelism?

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‘many Christians are like arctic rivers.... Frozen at the mouth’

With sober judgement, could the above quote in Chris book describe your present effectiveness in sharing the gospel?

Q5. If so what might help you ‘thaw out’ and loosen your mouth to be able to speak the gospel? How does this link to question 4?

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Q6. What has most challenged you in this chapter?

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Pray together as a group. Pray for opportunity and divine encounters to share the good news of Jesus with those around. Commit to pray for one another and commit to share and encourage each other at group next week.

Further study section

Read John 4v1-42. This is Jesus encountering a Samaritan woman at a well. In this account he is able to speak into her life powerfully and accurately, which, in turn, softens a whole town to the gospel. This clearly causes us to marvel at Jesus, however, I hope it also provokes us to pray for and follow his example.

- How does Jesus’ example speak to us today?
- Is this sort of evangelism still possible today through ‘ordinary’ Christians?
- Have you heard of any modern day examples of this?

Pray for divine encounters, words of knowledge and prophetic words today.

Chapter 5 – Equipped by Jesus

In Chris's next chapter he pulls out 20 top tips from two key passages of scripture where Jesus is sending his disciples out to do make disciples. These are Matthew 10v1-39 and Matthew 28v17 -20.

Before answering the questions below, read these passages again.

Now see twenty challenging questions below, addressing how we are applying Jesus teaching in our own lives, based on Chris observations about Jesus ministry.

Authority q1. Where in life do you feel like you exercise the most authority? (work, socially). What does Jesus say about your authority with the gospel?

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Right message q2. When you get an opportunity to share your faith, do you share about Jesus or talk around the gospel?

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Healing and deliverance q3. Have you ever really taken this command of Jesus seriously?

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Freedom and flexibility q4. Are you too busy for God to interrupt your day for you to share Jesus with a friend / neighbour / colleague?

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Know your home base q5. Chris described church like a 'family fishing business'. Are you playing your part in the business?

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Peace q6. When you meet people do you bring 'peace' to rest on them or add to the chaos?

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Reality q7. Jesus instructed the disciples to shake the dust off their feet. Are there any situations you are facing where it is time to focus your energy elsewhere?

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Wisdom q8. Jesus says he has 'sent us out like sheep amongst wolves.' Are there any situations / conversations you are currently involved in where you need to step away / ensure you handle wisely (including on social media)?

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Influence q9. Where would you like God to give you opportunities with the gospel before people of influence? Following on from chapter 4 pray into this.

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Worry-free q10. Have you hidden behind the excuse of not knowing what to say? If so, pray and ask God for his strength and courage today.

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Expect persecution q11. Have you suffered persecution / ridicule for sharing your faith?

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No fear of man q12. Honestly, what do you fear most when you share about Jesus to people?

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Healthy fear q13. If you were to reflect on your life over the last month, what actions have you taken that would suggest a healthy fear / reverence of God?

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God's care q14. God cares for every individual and every conversation you have. When can you last point to seeing God's care for individual circumstances clearly demonstrated in your life?

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Acknowledgement q15. It has been termed ‘cosmic plagiarism’ when we take the credit for something only God can do. Can you recall a time when God dramatically used you? Who got the glory?

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Devotion q16. Could you honestly reflect that you love him more than your family?

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Worship q17. Evangelism is part of your worship. How can you view evangelism in this way?

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Action q18. Jesus called us to ‘go’ and make disciples. What one action can you to today to be more proactive in making disciples?

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Commitment q19. Jesus called us to make disciples not converts. This takes commitment and faithfulness. Are their new believers in your site – how can you help them grow in their faith?

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With Jesus q20. Jesus promised to always be with us. This list is impossible in our own strength. Read and reflect on Isaiah 40v 29-31. What will help you ‘wait on him’ for his strength?

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Reflect on the question that most challenged you to change and the question that most encouraged and affirmed you in what you are doing. Share both answers in a pair or small group and pray for one another, that you would know his strength as you wait on him.

Chapter 6 – Equipped for a Great Commission

In chapter 6, Chris focuses on the great commission that Jesus gave to the disciples after he had risen from the dead (Matthew 28v18-20).

Chris devotes considerable time unpacking some of the context and the specifics of the occasion prior to getting onto verse 18. Re-read pages 114 – 121 if you have the book.

Q1. Write down as many specifics about the situation and the context as you can?

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Q2. Chris draws multiple lessons from these points. Which one in particular challenged or spoke to you? (e.g. obedience – they were where Jesus told them to go)

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Q3. We then begin to unpack the great commission. It opens with Jesus saying “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” When you think of Jesus what is the first thought that comes to mind? Does this need to change?

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The ‘go’ in the gospel. The challenge Chris gives us is costly. The challenge from Jesus is even more costly. He calls us to ‘go’. To give everything for the gospel. A phrase that often reverberates with me is this: would you rather live for comfort or for cause?

Q4. Are you following Jesus command to ‘go’?

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The reason for going follows; “make disciples of all nations”.

Q5. How are you helping to make disciples in Southampton? Is God encouraging you to step out further in this?

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Q6. How are you helping to make disciples in the nations? In what ways could you develop in this?

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Next Jesus instructs his disciples to 'baptise them'.

Q7. What obstacles do you find people sometimes put up to getting baptised? How could you help others overcome these?

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Jesus teaches us to make disciples not converts. Chris likens are approach to the bible as like a buffet – we pick and choose.

Q8. In what areas of your own life do you find obedience to the bible a struggle presently?

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The great commission concludes by Jesus saying 'he is with us always'. This is where our confidence rests. Not in our abilities but in the fact that God is with us every step of the way.

As a group why not break bread and wine together. Remembering it is all because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, that you can have been forgiven and can approach God with confidence that he is with you every step of your journey wherever you find yourself.

Chapter 7 – Equipped to Communicate

Have you ever felt practically ill-equipped, under prepared and out of your depth when considering sharing your faith? Although Chris is clear to say these are just helpful tools and can by no means be used in a prescriptive or non-grace-filled sense (we must meet people where they are at), they are nonetheless extremely helpful tools to have in your armoury so that you are ready to communicate the truths of the gospel at any given opportunity with real clarity.

Model 1 – Gospel Keys.

Can you recall 4 different verses that could act to unlock the gospel to someone for the first time under the following headings?

The problemthe penalty

God's answerour response

If not, why not look up p139 and take a picture on your phone so you always have it to hand.

Model 2 – Gospel Picture

Have a go at drawing out the gospel picture from memory in the space below. At life group share this and explain the gospel to someone there. Having done this re-read p140-143 and see if any key gospel components were missing.

Model 3 – One Verse Gospel

Chris demonstrates in his book how to unpack the gospel from one verse memorised. Following his example, unpack from memory the key aspects of the gospel from the example given;

“For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord” Romans 6v23

For the wages of sin is death

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But the gift of God

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Is eternal life

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Through Christ Jesus our Lord

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Chris’ focus isn’t that we all have the perfect tool that we wheel out every time, rather that we would be ready and equipped with the gospel and skilled at communicating it in a wise, clear and influential way.

Q1. Which of the above models could you see yourself using and why?

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Q2. Has anyone already utilised one of these methods?

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Q3. Is there anyone you are close to who doesn’t yet know Jesus who you could share your faith with using one of these tools?

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Q4. Are there any other tools you have found helpful in sharing the gospel?

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End by practicing one of these models with one another and praying for one another that you would have an opportunity to use it this week.

Then spend an evening as a Life Group sharing your testimony with one another and helping one another bring clarity, structure and sharpness to each other's testimony's by asking one another the following questions?

Q1. What one thing from my testimony did you find most encouraging / pertinent?

Q2. What one thing from my testimony do you need to ask me about (needs greater clarity)?

Q3. What one thing did you learn or were you reminded about Jesus from my testimony?

End with a time of prayer, encouraging and challenging one another – what one person could I share my story of Jesus at work in my life before our next life group evening.

Chapter 9 – Equipped for the Miraculous

In Chris's final chapter he challenges us to look at the scriptures and to expect 'God to be God'. Specifically, with reference to healing the sick and miraculous breakthrough. He recognises the challenge many of us have in terms of our own 'experiences and disappointments' but encourages us not to let our present experience forms our future expectations in the area of healing and miracles.

Q1. In Chris's opening line he says 'paracetamol and sympathy' are the tools he used to feel he had in his tool belt for helping those who are sick. Do you relate to this? Do you feel you utilise any additional tools?

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Q2. Chris points to the biblical 'norm' of healing in the new testament. Are you convinced biblically, that supernatural intervention and healing is for today?

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Q3. Cite as many examples as you can from the book of acts where supernatural healing occurs or is referenced to?

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Chris encourages all of us to 'make progress' in this area.

Q4. What is your experience to date? (i.e. Prayed for sick relative, seen someone healed, sympathy and paracetamol, no experience)

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Q5. What might be the next step for you to make further progress in this area?

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The emphasis goes on to be 'staying rooted'. We are reminded of the fact that miracles are impressive and that sadly it is not uncommon for those making progress with the miraculous to become detached from healthy roots

and accountability. Chris points to 4 key things to help keep us rooted as we grow in this area. These are:

1. Be in a strong and growing personal relationship with Jesus
2. Love those around you well. Make sure you are loving your family well and caring for them well.
3. Be stuck into a healthy local church and grow in the miraculous in this context alongside others.
4. Be in line with the prophetic and apostolic. Be a person who listens to what those who speak into your local church context are saying. Be open to guidance and God's leading through these two voices.

Q6. Which one of these 4 things do you feel you are strongest in? Which one do you most need to grow in?

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Chris quotes another well-known evangelist Lex Loizides saying this fantastic quote; 'when you pray for the sick, you are leaning on an open door'. He also talks about cultivating courage.

Q7. God loves and cares for people and heals out of love and compassion. How does the quote above and knowing God cares help you overcome your fear and pray with faith and courage?

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Making Progress – practical suggestions...

- In your life group why not pray for one another now for any among you who are sick.
- Resolve to pray for those who are sick when opportunities present themselves with friends / neighbours etc. The opportunities will come it is whether we are willing to take them.
- Chris is very real about the reality that we don't see everyone healed today. However, commit to persevere in prayer for those who are sick, even when you don't see instant results.
- Finally, Chris reminds us of the urgency of the task in hand. Life is short, death is real. Who is God wanting you to speak to today?

Pray for one another, that we would be motivated out of love to reach those around us with the gospel and that our message might be accompanied by signs and wonders.

Thank you so much for going through this study guide to accompany the Equipped book written by Chris Kilby. We hope and pray it inspired you in your walk with Jesus and in your fruitfulness as a believer. If throughout the course of this study God has provoked and encouraged you to fruitfulness, we would love to hear about all God has been doing in your life. To share your testimony please contact: office@lifesouthampton.org

With love and prayers,

Life Church Southampton

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