



July 2016

Welcome to the TFC newsletter! I hope these updates and recommendations help you in your ministry to prisoners...

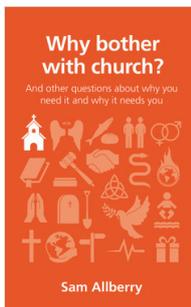
Bible studies



TFC offers 18 Bible study series including new short studies from Luke's gospel. The Moses and Psalms series have been

translated into Spanish. All available from www.tfcministries.org.uk/resources/bible-studies

Book review



Sam Allberry's book ends with the question, 'Why on earth would I *not* bother with church?', and by the time you've read it, it seems a very reasonable question.

One of the Good Book Company's 'Questions

Christians Ask' series, this little book is jam-packed with what the Bible says about why we should bother with church.

Allberry begins by explaining what church is: it's not a gathering of 2 or 3 believers over a latte, a building or a denomination. It is God's family. He reminds us that the local church is not a *part* of the universal church but that it *is* the church of God in a particular locale. 'Church is... not a meeting you attend but a body you belong to.' (p30). He addresses some tricky questions, including 'Hasn't the church done more harm than good?' and 'Why are there so many denominations?' and gives

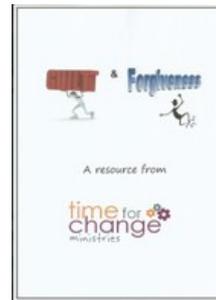
very clear answers, which we would do well to be able to articulate, since they seem to come up so often in ministry to prisoners.

He also addresses the issue of why we need to belong to a church once we are a believer. Essentially it's all about needing other believers – people who will encourage and serve us, and whom we can encourage and serve. He says that by refusing to belong to a local church, we are depriving the church of a member of its body, along with the particular gifts of that member.

Allberry also explains that a small group cannot function as a church because it is not big enough to have a balanced representation of the local community or of spiritual gifts, it doesn't have the authority to exert church discipline and cannot share the Lord's supper in a way that demonstrates whole church unity. A small group is just that – a small group of people who belong to the local church.

He gives a clear summary of Biblical church leadership and different contemporary leadership styles, but I've run out of room and you'll just have to read it!

Guilt and Forgiveness Course



Don't forget the *TFC Guilt and Forgiveness Course* – an 8 session course, written specifically for the prison environment, which unpacks the Bible's teaching about these two huge issues for prisoners.

Available from gillian@tfcministries.org.uk for £22 +p&p.

www.tfcministries.org.uk



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