

Home Group notes for the week following Sunday 14th June 2014

THEME: TRINITY

As we Gather

Throughout his Gospel, Matthew stresses the authority of Jesus, but at the end he emphasises that Jesus has ALL authority – both in heaven and earth (see Daniel 7:13-14). It is the use of this (personal) authority that Jesus has, through the Holy Spirit, given to His followers / disciples.

Reading Scripture MATTHEW 28 : 16 - 20

Thinking together

Jesus' disciples went to Galilee to meet Him as arranged (Matthew 28:16).

If you had been there, how do you think you would have reacted? Discuss

What are your feelings about meeting Jesus today? Discuss

In His last words to His followers, Jesus did three things

- He assured them, and us, of His authority (the right to use power) (Matthew 28:16) By His death and resurrection Jesus defeated all His enemies. The implication for all His followers is that we can follow Him without fear. No matter what circumstances we face, or where He leads us, He is in control.

How does this knowledge make you feel? Discuss

- He gave them, and us, a commission (Matthew 28:19-20a) Jesus' ministry was in Israel, but now the proclamation of, and adherence to His Lordship is extended to all nations.
A disciple is one who believes in Jesus Christ and expresses this allegiance / faith openly by water baptism under the authority of the entire godhead (Trinity). Jesus' words (Matthew 28:19) affirm the reality of the Trinity when He commands that baptism be done in the name (not names) of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

What is the function /symbolism of baptism? Discuss

Christianity is a missionary faith which reflects the nature of God – love; and love will not let any be lost (2 Peter 3:5-9). If we, as the children of God, share His nature we will want to tell the good news to others. This is the responsibility of every believer / disciple.

A disciple or apprentice is one who attaches himself / herself to a teacher, identifies with the teacher, learns from the teacher by listening and doing, lives with the teacher, and remains in fellowship with other believers to be taught the truths of the faith (2 Timothy 1:13-14 and 2:1-2).

How are we able to fulfil these requirements today? Discuss

The early church operated on the basis of the Lord's authority, and all believers / disciples did everything in His name – making disciples through witnessing / preaching, baptising and teaching.

Today, in many respects, we no longer follow this pattern – the pastor / minister being paid to preach, win the lost, and build up the saved, while church members function as cheerleaders or spectators

In what ways is this true of your local church? Discuss

In what ways does your local church still operate like the early church? Discuss

Jesus opened the minds of the disciples to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:44-45). It is not enough to win converts, we must also teach the word of God to make disciples.

What learning / teaching opportunities are there in your church? Discuss

- He promised them, and us, His presence (Matthew 28:20b)
The Old Testament prophecies and Matthew's genealogies present us with Jesus' credentials for being King of the world, worthy of worship as Saviour and Lord – a spiritual leader who can overcome evil and who can rule the heart.
Through the Holy Spirit, Christ is with His people to the end of the age

How does this promise make you feel? Discuss

In Closing

The righteousness of the true disciple is defined by the presence of Christ, not by the Law. This requires that, through the Holy Spirit, we apprentice ourselves to the Master Teacher – giving Him our total commitment and loyalty, without compromise.

Is this how you live your life?

A PRAYER YOU MIGHT LIKE TO READ

God of unchangeable power, you have revealed yourself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Keep us firm in this faith that we may praise and bless your holy name, for you are one God now and for ever. Amen