

Home Group notes for the week following Sunday 2nd March 2014

THEME: IDENTITY IN CHRIST – MY STRENGTHS

As we Gather

The parable of the talents as recorded by Matthew reveals the consequences of our attitudes toward Christ and His return.

Reading Scripture MATTHEW 25 : 14 - 30

Thinking together

God has a purpose and plan for each of us, and He supplies each of us with the ability and resources (strengths) needed to achieve His desired result(s). He never asks more of us than He knows we are able to give / achieve (Matthew 25:15).

What ability / abilities and what resources has God gifted you with? Discuss

When disciples use their talents faithfully, wisely and fully in the service of God, they

- Experience ever increasing love for the Master

How has your knowledge / experience of, and love for, the Master increased in the past six months? Discuss

- Become aware of more and more opportunities to use their gifts in His service

What has God called you to do for Him

- = use your talents to improve the quality of your daily work?
- = change jobs for Him?
- = become more involved in the church activities?
- = share your faith with others in the community / society?
- = become involved in social justice activities?
- = work that is unique to your gift?

- Are progressively able to do more with these (their capacity increases) as they take responsibility for developing / growing their gift(s)

How have you grown your gift(s) in God's service in the past 6 months? Discuss

God gives many different strengths, and expects each individual to use fully what has been given. None is equal in gifts, but all are equal in effort.

The temptation is to say that you have so little ability / talent that it is not much worth trying to achieve anything

Have you ever been tempted to belittle your ability / talent? Discuss

There may be a number of motives for failure to use abilities for the common good

- Selfishness, in which abilities are used to promote one's own interests.
- Laziness, or rebellion against the Master's ways.
- Dislike for / fear of change. Life is never the same again when working for God, and the unexpected becomes part of life with Him.

We are all assigned (by God) callings according to the abilities He has given us as His stewards in the world. We may not be successful in the eyes of the world, but it is most often the people with one talent who get things done.

Think of the successful and enduring ministries in the church

What is the single / dominant talent needed for each of these? Discuss

In Closing

When a gift or ability is not used, eventually it will be lost – resulting in loss of joy and sorrowful remorse at lost opportunities (Matthew 25:30).

Have you ever regretted a lost opportunity because you failed to respond to God's call?