

Home Group notes for the week following 14th October 2018

THE CHALLENGE OF LOVE

AS WE GATHER

Much of Jesus' teaching turned many of the Jewish cultural and religious customs and beliefs on their heads as He revealed God's perspective on them.

Mark's record of the interaction between Jesus and the rich young man reveals very similar dynamics to those we experience when we come to Him searching for a more meaningful life.

READING SCRIPTURE Mark 10:17-31 [optional readings Job 23:1-9 + 16-17 Psalm 22:1-15 Hebrews 4:12-16]

THINKING TOGETHER

Love as practiced by Jesus (Christian love) is an act of will; a decision from which all that is good in our lives follows.

The young man who came to Jesus had so much in his favour – youth, potential, enthusiasm, good manners, good morals and a heart's desire for spiritual things. Unfortunately, like so many of his time (and still today), he had a shallow understanding of spiritual things.

- He thought he could earn salvation / eternal life (Mark 10:17)

Do you know anyone today who still thinks this, and why this is so? Discuss

- He called Jesus 'good teacher' at a time when rabbis taught that only God is good and that the word must be reserved for Him alone (Mark 10:17-18)

Why do you think he called Jesus 'good teacher'? Discuss

- He measured obedience to the Law of Moses in terms of outward actions, not inward attitudes (Mark 10:19-20)

What was God's purpose in giving the Ten Commandments? Discuss

- He thought about sin in terms of an action – not as an attitude / rebellion against God (Mark 10:21-22)

How has your understanding and implementation of the Commandments changed throughout your Christian journey? Discuss

Money and possessions had supplanted God in the young man's life. He was unable to keep the first Commandment [Exodus 20:3], and so was unable to meet the only requirement of Jesus – turn his whole life over to God (Mark 10:21)

What are the dangers of prosperity / material wealth? Discuss [1Timothy 6:6-10]

What barriers keep you from turning your whole life over to Christ? Discuss
[1 Corinthians 1:26-31]

We are told that Jesus loved the young man (Mark 10:21a). In just such a way He loves us enough

- To ask that we follow Him with and out of love (Mark 10:27)
- To challenge us to move out of our comfort zone (Mark 10:28-30)

What do you feel you cannot give up for Jesus? Discuss

- To grieve when we hesitate / fail to respond to Him (Mark 10:23-24)

Do you find it comforting to know that even though Christ / God knows us intimately He still loves us in spite of our failings? Discuss

IN CLOSING

Jesus practiced tough love when He died for us on the cross; and He still does when He gives us life-changing challenges

What has Jesus recently asked you to do for Him?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have taught us that without love
whatever we do is worthless.
Pour into our hearts your wonderful gift
of love without which whatever lives is
counted dead before you. Amen