

Home Group notes for the week following 18 February 2018

LENT ONE - TEMPTATION

AS WE GATHER

In every life there come moments of decision which have consequences whether the moment is accepted or rejected. Through John's ministry there was a movement of people back to God and for Jesus this was His moment of decision as He identified with this movement.

READING SCRIPTURE **Mark 1:9-15** [optional readings Genesis 9:8-17 Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:8-12]

THINKING TOGETHER

The essence of the temptation story recorded in Mark is that Jesus had to choose between the way of God (and set up a reign of love), or the way of Satan -the adversary of God - (and set up a dictatorship of force). He had to decide how He was going to do His work. Every person today faces the same decision.

Share with the group a moment of decision you have experienced, how you reacted and what the consequences were. Discuss

For Jesus the moment of decision was His baptism by John (Mark 1:9). When Jesus was baptised the Spirit came upon Him as a dove and the Father spoke from heaven identifying Him as His beloved Son (Mark 1:10-11). Only Jesus and John saw the dove and heard the voice (John 1:29-34) [optional readings Psalm 2:7 Isaiah 42:1]

Why was Jesus baptised? Discuss

**What is the symbolism of the dove, and how was this manifested in Jesus' teaching?
Discuss**

What was, and still is, the significance of the presence of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit? Discuss (Mark 1:10-11)

Jesus went straight from His experience on the banks of the Jordan River into the desert.

Why did the Spirit send Jesus into the desert? Discuss

It was Satan (God's adversary) who tempted Jesus in the desert, just as he tempts us today.

Why did Satan tempt Jesus? Discuss

What are our temptations today? Discuss

To be tempted is not a sin. How we respond to temptation is what matters.

How do you deal with temptation? Discuss (Hebrews 4:14-16)
[optional readings Genesis 3:1-8 Isaiah 35:8-9 Ephesians 6:10-18]

Jesus, the Servant of God (Philippians 2:5-7), is unlike any other servant. He is God the Son, and as such has all the powers of God. He exercises authority and His orders are obeyed.
[optional reading Isaiah 11:2-4 + 6-9]

Jesus left Judea and went to Galilee after John's death

Why did He do this? Discuss

The words of Jesus recorded in Mark 1:14-15 sum up Jesus' message, and the Christian faith. The three dominant words being *good news*, *repent*, and *believe*.

Why were Jesus' words good news to those who heard Him in Galilee? Discuss

Jesus revealed God's truth with authority as He spoke of the Gospel of the kingdom. The only way to enter this spiritual realm is by believing the good news (John 3:1-7)

What is the good news of God? Discuss (Mark 1:14)

[optional readings Colossians 1:3-5 + 21-23 Ephesians 3:6 2 Timothy 1:8-10]

There is only one Gospel and it centres in what Christ did for us on the Cross. Paul called it the Gospel of Grace (Acts 20:24). [optional reading Galatians 1:1-9].

IN CLOSING

The coming of Jesus integrates the disintegrated personalities of human beings (sin verses goodness), by conquering these two warring elements when individuals repent (develop a hatred for sin itself through a change of mind), and believe that God is the kind of God Jesus revealed: A God who loves the world so much that He will make any sacrifice to bring people back to Himself.

PRAYER

God of our salvation,
your bow in the clouds proclaims your covenant with
every living creature, and your voice liberates the future
from the past.
Speak your affirming word; renew our covenant, and grant
us your Spirit that we may serve the world through and in
the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen