

Home Group notes for the week following 13th August 2017

DISCIPLESHIP: Dependency

AS WE GATHER

Throughout the ages people have tended to allow personal motives and emotions to influence their decisions and their responses to events and relationships. Believers and unbelievers alike often suffer the consequences of choices made based on fear, anger, jealousy, selfishness, ambition; but also on duty, love, generosity, and a sense of justice.

READING SCRIPTURE Genesis 37:1-4 + 12-28 Psalm 105:1-6 + 16-22 Romans 10:5-15
Matthew 14:22-33

THINKING TOGETHER

Matthew tells us that immediately after feeding the 5000 Jesus sent His disciples back to the boat while He dismissed the crowd

Why do you think He did this? Discuss (Mark 10:35-41 John 6:14-15)

After dismissing the crowd, Jesus was at last able to have time alone with His Father (Matthew 14:13 + 23)

Why is it important for Christians to spend time alone with God? Discuss

Through the disciples' experience of the storm, Christians can take comfort in their own struggles / life storms, and have the reassurance that

- When trouble results through obedience to God, He will take care of us because He brought us into the situation (Matthew 14:22 + 28-29)

**How do we keep our faith in difficult circumstances? Discuss
(Psalm 105:4-6 Matthew 7:7-8 Matthew 14:27 + 31 Hebrews 11:6)**

Peter was the only disciple in the boat to react in faith, and his experience (Matthew 14:28-31) clearly revealed his character - his actions were impulsive because he was ruled by a heart of love (Matthew 26:31-25)

- he often failed due to his impulsiveness (Matthew 16:22)
- he always reached out to Christ in his moment of failure (Matthew 14:30)

What does your response to Jesus reveal about your character? Discuss (Luke 9:57-62)

- Christ is praying for us. The Church / faith community is as much under attack today as it was in the early days. Christ knows our situation and intercedes for us with the Father (John 16:33 Hebrews 4:14-16 Romans 8:34-35)

How would you feel about what is troubling you today if you knew that Jesus was next door praying for you? Discuss

- Jesus will come to us. Often we feel we are facing our struggles alone, even when we know Jesus will be with us and strengthen us in our need (Isaiah 43:1-3a John 14:15-17 2 Corinthians 1:8-10)

Why did the disciples not recognise Jesus? Discuss (Matthew 14:24-26)

Do you always recognise Jesus when He comes to you in your need? Discuss

- God will help us grow. Through the trials / troubles / struggles of life, Christians learn to trust Jesus and obey His word no matter what the situation (1Peter 3:12)

Do you agree with this statement? Discuss

- Christ will see us through because if Jesus says 'come' He will always finish what He started. All we have to do is respond to His invitation and accept His gift (Matthew 14:19 + 32-33 Romans 10:6-12).

IN CLOSING

The presence of Jesus and the love that flows from the cross always brings peace, serenity and calm into the lives (hearts and minds) of God's children; and our faith experience becomes a blessing to others as well as ourselves, just as Peter's experience blessed the other disciples

When you think about Jesus, are you able to say from both your heart and mind, 'Truly you are the Son of God'?

PRAYER

God of awesome wonder,
 bless us with a bold belief even in the darkness of the night
 and the assault of life's storms, that we may be messengers of
 your peace and justice; in the name of the One whom the winds
 and waves obey, and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and forever. Amen