

Home Group notes for the week following Sunday 13th March 2016

LENT FIVE - EXTRAVAGANT LOVE

As we Gather

The extravagance of God's love should draw from believers a response that is equally extravagant.

Reading Scripture John 12:1-8 see also Isaiah 43:16-21 Psalm 126 Philippians 3:4b-14

Thinking Together

God's mercy and faithfulness to His people has a timeless relevance, as their response to deliverance – as is ours today – is to live and speak to His praise (Isaiah 43:16-21 Psalm 126 1 Peter 2:9-10). God's ability to restore life is beyond our understanding. He is able to bring good out of tragedy, transforming the lives of those who believe and trust in Him (Philippians 3:4b-14).

How do we grow in godliness / live according to the Scriptures? Discuss
Romans 4:1-8 Ephesians 1:15-23

Is the relationship you have with Christ more important to you than anything else in your life? Discuss Galatians 2:20 Ephesians 3:14-21

The Holy Spirit is the key to a truly dynamic devotion to God. Lazarus was a living witness to the power of God (John 12:1); Martha expressed her love through the work of her hands, giving what she could (John 12:2). Mary's heart overflowed in love and we read of a unique act of love performed for a specific occasion – a public declaration of faith in Jesus as Messiah.

As in the work of Jesus on the Cross we see the full extravagance of God's love for His people, so again in this act of Mary we see the full extravagance of love

- Love gives all and does not count the cost (John 12:3a Philippians 3:7-8)

Do you count the cost of your love for Jesus? Discuss

- Love is humble, focussing only on the object of love (John 12:3b Luke 10:43 Mark 10:21 John 9:25)
- Love is unselfconscious (John 12:3c)

Are you self-conscious about showing your Christianity? Discuss

Mary's beautiful act of worship brought a fragrance to the house, and the blessing of her deed has spread around the world (Matthew 26:13).

Through the reaction of Judas to Mary's action (John 12:5) we see how a point of view can become warped when temptation is present. How we view things depends on what is inside us.

Do you know someone who has a critical spirit? Discuss

Through Jesus' response to both Mary's action and Judas' reaction, we learn that we should grasp every opportunity to express love. Failure to express love can often bring the bitterest remorse of all.

Have you ever experienced this? Discuss

In Closing

From this week's reading in the Gospel of John, chapter 12, we see that the Christian life should be a balance of worship, work and witness.

Does your life bring joy to the heart of Jesus through your worship, work and witness?

PRAYER

Holy God and Lord of life,
by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ,
you delivered and saved the world. Grant that by faith
in Him who suffered on the Cross we may triumph in
the power of His victory. Amen