

Home Group notes for the week following 15th October 2017

DISCIPLESHIP: Righteousness

AS WE GATHER

Matthew records in verses 1-14 of chapter 22 that Jesus again pointedly addressed the spiritual - disobedience of the Jewish leaders when He told this parable. As with the previous two parables, He used customs known to and understood by all His listeners

**READING SCRIPTURE Exodus 32:1-14 Psalm 106:1-6 + 20-24 Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14**

THINKING TOGETHER

Over and over God invites all people to His banquet of eternal life, but only those clothed in the righteousness of Christ may enter His kingdom (Psalm 132:16 Isaiah 61:10 Zechariah 3:3-5 Revelation 3:2-6 and 19:6-8).

History demonstrates that human nature prefers the familiar and the controllable. It is the way we respond to an issue that demonstrates our spirit / attitude to the situation (Exodus 32:1-14 Psalm 106:1-6 Philippians 4:1-9).

What is your image of God? Is it Biblical? Discuss

Discuss some of the occasions you know God has blessed / protected you

What does it mean to 'stand firm in the Lord'? Discuss

Moses interceded with God on behalf of the Israelites – who intercedes for you? Discuss

Do all 'religious' films / books contribute to Christian spiritual growth? Discuss

In the parable of the wedding banquet, Jesus was warning the Jewish leaders that their refusal to accept God's invitation to change would have dire consequences for both the nation and individuals.

How is it possible that God – the same yesterday, today and forever – can and will relent towards those who turn to Him? Discuss

Barclay points out that the consequences for Israel were that the message of Good News was taken to Samaritans and Gentiles (Matthew 22:8-10); and Jerusalem was destroyed by Roman armies in the year 70AD.

Wiersbe interprets this parable as the Jewish leaders' rejection of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the church, and their persecution of the Apostles (Acts 2:32-36 and 3:19-26). It was after the stoning of Stephen that the Good News went to the Samaritans and the Gentiles (Acts 7:51-53 and 8 and 10).

Ultimate Christian joy and peace come from Christ (the Holy Spirit) dwelling within us. Those who are foolish and think there is plenty of time to accept Christ as Saviour and Lord miss this because of skewed priorities (Matthew 22:5-6 +11-14 Philippians 4:4-9).

Why does Paul advocate putting into practice what we learn about Christian life? Discuss

How do you prepare yourself for worship? Discuss

In what spirit do you go to the church service? Discuss

IN CLOSING

Although salvation is personal and individual, it is open to all who respond to God's invitation and receive the righteousness of Christ.

Apparent sincerity in worship is no substitute for obedience, or excuse for disobedience, and those who respond to God's invitation must bring a life which strives to fit the love given them.

PRAYER

Lord of the feast,

you invite everyone to your banquet.

Keep us from all that distracts us and stir in us a

desire to respond with gladness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.