

Home Group notes for the week following Sunday 2nd October 2016

FAITHFULNESS

As we Gather

On His way to Jerusalem for the last time, Jesus took every opportunity to teach His disciples what they would need to know in order to cope when He was no longer with them. With a similar purpose, Paul wrote from his Roman prison to Timothy, the young leader of the church in Ephesus.

Reading Scripture **2 Timothy 1:1-14** **Luke 17:5-10**

Thinking Together

Arising out of a teaching just completed, the disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith (Luke 17:5). Although He did not address their request directly, Jesus pointed out that the amount of faith a person has is not as important as a living / genuine faith which will grow, produce fruit, and enable believers to obey God's commands (Luke 17:6 2 Timothy 1:5 Mark 4:30-32 Psalm 27:1 + 5-6 Lamentations 3:19-26).

What is faith? Discuss

Faith has been said to be the greatest force in the world.

Do you agree with this statement? Discuss

Paul (2 Timothy 1:1-7), considered his apostleship to be

- An honour = chosen by God to do His work
As a Christian, do you consider yourself to be God-chosen? Discuss
- A responsibility = chosen to be the instrument through which the Good News of new life is taken to others
As a Christian, are you so lost in wonder, love and praise for what God has done for you that you cannot wait to tell others what God can do for them? Discuss
- A privilege = chosen to tell of God's love and His promise of Salvation
Do you consider what you do for God to be a privilege? Discuss

Privileges must always be balanced with responsibility (James 2:14-26)

Luke records (Luke 17:7-10) that Jesus went on to teach that faith that does not result in faithfully performing the routine tasks entrusted to every believer, cannot / will not accomplish God's work.

If we have willingly obeyed God – done our best to carry out our allotted tasks, we should consider this a blessing / privilege. If we expect recognition / extra credit for what we do, we need to examine our attitude to service / ministry. A faithful servant obeys his / her master out of love and trust (Luke 17:10 2 Timothy 1:12-14).

What is the right / proper attitude to Christian service? Discuss **(John 14:15-17a 1 John 5:3-4 Psalm 40:8)**

Do you trust Christ's promise of the Holy Spirit to give you the power you need to serve / testify in His name? Discuss

Paul knew God intimately and entrusted himself, his life and his ministry to God, and God entrusted His truth to Paul. Even in prison Paul left God to deal with the consequences of his obedience.

How well do you know God / Christ? Can you trust Him like Paul did? Discuss

In Closing

Throughout the centuries God's work has been done by men and women who have been steadfast and faithful in the face of trials: And throughout the history of the Church the Word of God has been attacked – often by people within the Church.

How does this last statement make you feel?

PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God,
you appointed us as heralds of your gospel:
Increase our faith that we may run the way of
your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy.

Amen