

Home Group notes for the week following Sunday 22nd January 2017

... THY WILL BE DONE ... Jesus starts His ministry

As we Gather

Wiersbe writes that 'Matthew shows us that every detail of our Lord's life was controlled by the word of God': He brought light to a lost and defeated people through His revelation of God's word of truth and hope, and through His perfect life and compassion.

Reading Scripture **Isaiah 9:1-4** **Psalm 27:1+4-12** **1 Corinthians 1:10-18**
Matthew 2:12-23

Thinking Together

When He heard that John the Baptist had been imprisoned, Jesus began His ministry in all earnest, proclaiming the same message that John had (Matthew 4:17).
Jesus' message of Good News is still the same today

What do you understand 'repent' to mean? Discuss

How does Jesus' move to Capernaum reflect the spiritual and behavioural move repentant sinners make? Discuss

When Jesus called the four fishermen to follow Him (Matthew 4:18-22) they were not unknown to Him, having spent time with Him while disciples of John (John 1:39-42). They followed Him because they knew Him and were willing to submit to His leadership.

Do you submit to the leadership of Jesus? Discuss

Each of these men left his old and familiar lifestyle because they trusted Jesus to lead them into the challenge of the unknown.

Do you trust Jesus in this way? Discuss

Jesus chose Capernaum as His headquarters because it was on the trade route, was a thriving town inhabited by people from all over the then known world who were open to change and new ways of thinking. It was also surrounded by Gentile towns and cities. This demonstrated the inclusiveness / universality of His ministry.

Jesus came -

- Proclaiming / preaching (G – keryssein = to proclaim) the rule of God – i.e. the kingdom of heaven. He sought to change people's ignorance about God. He came to tell the truth about God
- Teaching and explaining the significance of what the kingdom of heaven means. He came to combat misunderstandings and misinterpretations the meaning of true religion

What does the kingdom of heaven mean to you? Discuss

What do you understand by 'true religion'? Discuss

- Healing all manner of illnesses. He came to defeat human pain and give wholeness

What do you understand by 'wholeness'? Discuss

What is the underlying cause of what we call spiritual illness? Discuss

Jesus turned truth into deeds, revealing that God is with us; God cares for us; showing us that Christ can heal us physically and spiritually. He is able to release us from the bondage of sin into freedom, hope, peace of heart and eternal life with God

What does the freedom of / freedom in, God mean to you? Discuss

Life without boundaries, without guidance, without God, becomes life without meaning, or purpose or peace.

In God we find our uniqueness and true freedom to be what He meant us to be (John 1:40-42). God's will does not crush us, it develops us, directs us and guides us towards our God-intended beauty and usefulness in this world.

Human beings tend to live in rebellion against God

Why is this? Discuss

How can you discern what God's will is for you? Discuss

How can we discover God's will for the local church? Discuss

In Closing

God's will is not, can never be, separated from His love - as Jesus demonstrated. What He wills for us will always prove to be best for us.

To enter God's kingdom is to enter an abundant life and to follow His will is the way of peace.

Where is God's kingdom at this present time?

PRAYER

God of new beginnings, give us the faith and courage to turn and joyfully follow you into the adventures of trusting and faithful service, through Jesus Christ our light and our salvation. Amen