

Home Group notes for the week following 23rd July 2017

DISCIPLESHIP: Trust

AS WE GATHER

During this present age (on earth) God's kingdom is a mixture of true and false, good and bad, professing allegiance to Christ yet containing much that is contrary to the principles of Christ.

READING SCRIPTURE **Genesis 28:10-19a** **Psalms 139:1-11 + 23-24** **Romans 8:12-24**
Matthew 13:24-30 + 36-43

THINKING TOGETHER

In chapter 13 Matthew has grouped together (some of) Christ's teachings about God and His kingdom – the spiritual realm where God rules and believers share His eternal life. Christians join the kingdom when they trust Christ as Saviour. Satan opposes the kingdom by trying to remove the Word from believer's hearts in many ways. In this parable he plants false Christians.

What do you understand by the phrase 'false Christians'? Discuss

In this world believers and unbelievers live side by side (Matthew 13:30a), and in the parable the good seed represents people who have been converted through trusting the Word of God. The field is the world, and whenever Christ 'sows' a true Christian (John 12:23-26), Satan 'sows' a counterfeit (Romans 10:1-3 2 Corinthians 11:26).

Today there are true and false believers in the Church. It is when God's people become complacent that Satan is successful (1 John 4:1-6 2 Peter 2)

Why is it important that both true and false believers are present in the Church / world? Discuss (Matthew 13:29-30 + 40 + 43)

This parable teaches us that salvation is an ongoing process as we establish our personal relationship with God (Genesis 28:10-18 Galatians 3:6-9) – being past, present and future (Romans 8:23-25). There is always a hostile power in the world waiting to destroy faith and trust, so we need to be constantly on our guard as it is our attitude to sin which guides our response to temptation (Psalm 119:9-11 Romans 8:13).

What do you understand by salvation being past, present and future? Discuss

When last did you ask God to reveal your sin to you? Discuss (Psalm 139:23-24)

It is often hard to distinguish between those who are in the kingdom and those who are not. We need to remember that only God knows everything about everybody and He does not judge anyone by a single act, but by our whole lives. He alone has the right to judge as only He can discern good from bad.

Do you ever reveal yourself completely to others? Why not? Discuss

Have you ever been guilty of judging and classifying others? Discuss

IN CLOSING

At the end of our lives – and at the end of this age – we will be judged on how we have lived our lives as children of God (members of His kingdom).

Is this a comforting or a daunting thought for you? (Psalm 139:1-10)

PRAYER

Lord of heaven and earth,
you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and power of your Church:
Sow in our hearts the seeds of grace that we may bring forth the
fruit of the Spirit through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen