

Home Group notes for the week following 26th November 2017

DISCIPLESHIP: Worship

AS WE GATHER

As Christians we know that Christ is coming again. God has promised that the perfect shepherd – Messiah – will set up a kingdom of peace and justice. All of creation will share in the glorious freedom of God's children, the Church will reign with Christ, and contentment, fulfilment and security (shalom) will prevail.

READING SCRIPTURE Ezekiel 34:11-16 + 20-24 Psalm 100 Ephesians 1:15-23
Matthew 25:31-46

THINKING TOGETHER

This parable explains how Christ will judge individuals among the nations on His return and before setting up His kingdom on earth (Matthew 25:31-32). The trusting, obedient and faithful believers (the saved / sheep) will be separated from the pretenders and unbelievers (unsaved / goats).

- The saved will be told they inherit the kingdom (Matthew 25:24) through faith (Ephesians 2:8-10). Their inheritance is based on birth – being born again in the Spirit through faith – and not through good works. It is however right for believers to do good (Matthew 25:35-36 + 40 Galatians 6:10 Hebrews 13:15-16), and we will be judged according to our reaction to human need. The real evidence of our belief is what we do for others / how we meet the needs of others

What are these needs? Discuss

What are the ways we can meet a need / give help? Discuss

Jesus expects us to help in simple, everyday things that require no special skills or knowledge, but are the natural and instinctive reaction of a loving heart (Isaiah 58:6-7 2 Corinthians 9:8). Love for and service to others glorifies God by reflecting our love for Him

In what ways can we serve others? Discuss (1 Corinthians 12:5-11)

Why is help / generosity which is given with expectation of gratitude considered a sin? Discuss

How can our service glorify / become an act of worship of God? Discuss (1 Corinthians 12:4 and 13:4-7)

- For pretenders and unbelievers / unsaved, the way of salvation is not through good works (Matthew 25:33) but through acknowledgement of their sin (Psalm 51:3-4 + 17 and Ezekiel 34:20-24)

Those who do not accept Jesus as Lord, but listen to and follow Satan will join him in his eternal torment (Matthew 25:41), and when Jesus warns against unbelief He is trying to save us from the agonising punishment of eternal separation from God (Matthew 25:46 Psalm 22:1-2)

How can / do you reveal Jesus so that others may get to know Him? Discuss

Christ is our model and the more we know of Him, the more we will grow to be like Him (Ephesians 1:16-18) and learn to know that the Lord alone is worthy of being worshiped (Psalm 100)

How can we get to know Jesus better? Discuss

What is worship to you / your attitude to worship? Discuss

IN CLOSING

A generous heart which instinctively reaches out to help others in everyday situations brings joy to both recipient and giver, and brings glory to God.

Which one of the two eternal destinations open to every individual do you choose?

PRAYER

Most High God, majestic and mighty, our beginning and our end;
rule in our hearts and guide us to be faithful, worshiping the One
who comes as Saviour and Sovereign, and who lives and reigns
with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

THESE ARE THE FINAL NOTES FOR 2017. Have a blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year