

Home Group notes for the week following 18 March 2018

LENT FIVE – LIFE THE JESUS WAY

AS WE GATHER

Sin drives a wedge between us and God, but true remorse brings forgiveness and eternal salvation. It also brings cleansing of heart and spirit, giving rise to new thoughts and desires. God's grace creates a wonderful opportunity for us to make a fresh start – a new life by establishing a permanent, personal relationship with God through Christ.

READING SCRIPTURE **John 12:20-33** [optional readings Jeremiah 31:31-34 Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrews 5:5-10)]

THINKING TOGETHER

John tells us that while Jesus and His disciples were in Jerusalem for the Passover, some Greeks came looking to meet Him.

Greeks were generally known to be seekers after truth and great travellers; and Barclay points out that these verses (John 12:20-22) are the first hint of a gospel which is to go all through the world. We are not told whether the Greeks actually met and spoke with Jesus, but His response (John 12:23-25) shocked the listening Jews, as He came to them with a new view of life [optional reading Daniel 7:1-8 + 11-14].

Why were the Jews so shocked? Discuss

His words are the central theme / at the heart of Christian faith and life

1. Life comes only by death (John 12:24)

A seed of itself is weak and useless, but when planted, new life springs up.

Believers are like seeds – small and insignificant in ourselves, but having God's life in us

How do we have God's life in us? Discuss

In times of trial / suffering there are only two prayers we can pray; either 'Father, save me' or 'Father, glorify your name (John 12:27-28)

Which prayer do you pray most often? Discuss

How does it impact you to commit your life to bringing glory to Jesus? Discuss (John 12:26)

It was by the death of martyrs that the early Church grew

Is this still true of Church growth today? Discuss

2. By spending life we keep it (John 12:26)

Human beings are motivated by two aims – selfishness and a desire for security.

Our lives can only be fruitful and fulfilling when we die to self and live for God [optional readings Galatians 2:20 Philippians 2:1-11]

Do you want to be comfortable in life or do you want to live a conformable life? Discuss [optional readings Romans 12:1-2 Romans 8:28-29]

What does it mean to 'live the Jesus way'? Discuss (John 12:26 Romans 6)

3. There can be no victory without surrender (John 12:28-29)
Real courage means being afraid yet doing what ought to be done. The result of this is triumph and certainty (John 12:28-33). [optional readings 1 Samuel 3:1-14 and 1 Kings 19:1-18]

Are you prepared to risk stepping out in faith to do whatever God / Jesus calls you to do? Discuss

The voice of God came to Jesus at all the great moments of His life (Mark 1:11 Mark 9:7 and John 12:28-29). What God did for Jesus, He does for every believer. When He gives us a task, He gives us directions, guidance and His own strength.

How does God do this? Discuss [optional readings Philippians 2:12-13 Hebrews 5:14-16 John 14:24-26 Matthew 28:18-20]

When and how have you experienced this? Discuss

IN CLOSING

The people did not understand what Jesus was teaching. By a simple step of faith they could have passed from spiritual darkness into the light of salvation / a new life in Christ.

The miracle of Easter is that through the agony of the cross we discover the wonder, joy and peace of a lifestyle of ongoing trust and exploration of a relationship that we begin / experience in the here and now.

PRAYER

God of suffering and glory, in Jesus Christ you reveal the way of life.
Inscribe your law on our hearts that we may not stray from you, but
through Jesus Christ our Lord, remain your faithful people.

Amen

PLEASE NOT – THERE WILL BE NO MORE NOTES FOR 2 WEEKS.

THE NEXT SET OF NOTES WILL BE AVAILABLE ON SUNDAY 8 APRIL 2018