



Life Groups in Central Telford Parish
Autumn 2016 "Live Like You Mean It"
Week beginning 20th November 2016
Go Right Through The Pain Barrier

- **Welcome**

Are you a patient person? What makes you impatient or frustrated?

- **Worship**

Before you worship together, go round the group and ask what frustrations each person is facing at the moment- at home, at work or even at Church. Do not spend time unpacking each one – just a simple sentence of what each one is facing.

Read Psalm 37:7-8 and name these frustrations before God. Ask for forgiveness for when they have got out of hand and we have given in to the temptation to boil over. Pray that you can leave them to one side during your time together and find that you are better equipped to face them at the end of the session.

- **Word**

Read the summary of this part of David's life "**David and the Desert Time**" (at the bottom of this study)

- ❖ Can you sympathise with David? Why?
- ❖ What sorts of things make us frustrated? Think about the whole of life!
- ❖ Are there "common" themes or is everyone different?
- ❖ Why do we feel we are the only one?
- ❖ What sorts of thing feeds our frustration?
- ❖ Do you think that Jesus ever felt frustrated? If so, when?
- ❖ How do you think he dealt with it?

Jesus' Temptations in the wilderness were aimed at testing his patience. He had a task to fulfil and he must have faced enormous frustration at the dimness of the disciples, the self-interest of the crowds and the opposition and hatred of the Pharisees. The Temptations aimed to feed on those frustrations and tempt him to misuse his power for his own gain (stones to bread), a short cut to everyone seeing him as he was (throwing himself off the Temple) and, ultimately, to power (bowing down to Satan).

Read Romans 6:1-2

- Does being a Christian mean we never sin again?
- Is it ever ok for us to sin – knowing God will forgive us?
- So what should be our attitude towards sin in our lives?
- How does living with frustration become a temptation to us?
- What sorts of sin can it lead us into?

Read Romans 6:3-7. Paul says that when we bring our sin to the Cross of Jesus Christ, it gets nailed to the Cross with him, it is buried with him – and we gain the forgiveness symbolised by Jesus' resurrection and new life, freed from it. And this is symbolised in Baptism.

- ❖ How easy do you find it to bring your sin to the Cross?
- ❖ What happens when we don't bring our sin to the Cross and our sin remains unforgiven?
- ❖ When we do, the forgiveness is complete – read Psalm 103:11-12.

But the reality is that even with our sin forgiven, we get frustrated with life and often with God because things are not going the way we want them to or think they should.

The writer Rick Warren has some helpful advice:

- ❖ Ask yourself, "**Did I cause it?**" The Bible says, "*A man reaps what he sows*" (Galatians 6:7b NIV). We are frustrated by many things in life because we bring them on ourselves.
 - ❖ Ask yourself, "**What can I learn from it?**" Romans 8:28 says, "*In all things God works for the good of those who love him.*" There are many bad things in the world, but all things work together. God can even take the negative and turn it into a positive if we let him. Use irritation as an opportunity to become more like Christ.
 - ❖ **Thank God in the situation.** 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, "*Give thanks in all circumstances.*" You don't have to be thankful for a bad situation, but you can be thankful in a bad situation. Frustration may be a blessing in disguise.
 - ❖ **Turn the frustration into a funny, humorous event.** The Bible says, "*A cheerful heart is good medicine*" (Proverbs 17:22). A sense of humour is God's antidote for anger and frustration.
 - ❖ **Ask God to fill you with his love.** Why? Because 1 Corinthians 13:5 says, "*[Love] is not easily angered.*" Love is self-giving, not self-serving. We get irritated because we think everyone and everything has to revolve around us. Love concentrates on the other person.
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- Which of Rick Warren's suggestions do you find most helpful and why?
 - Which do you find the most challenging? Why?

Jesus faced constant frustrations, but he never got irritated. He always made time for people. We get so preoccupied with our own things that we forget that people are the priority in life.

- **Walk**

Go back to the frustrations you spoke about at the beginning of the session and, if you feel able to, ask for prayer from others. Spend some time listening to God and sharing any words, pictures, verses you think he might be saying to you as an individual or as a group. Be bold and brave – share with one another and discuss what you sense God is saying. Pray for any other specific issues people are facing in the Life Group. "***You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.***" (Isaiah 26:3 NIV)

- **Next Time ...**

Week beginning 27th November:

2 Samuel 1: Beyond Success To Significance

What success is truly about.



David and The Desert Time

David.

He has the promise of Samuel in his ears that one day he will be King.

He has the cheers and the shouts of the people ringing in his ears:

“Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands”

He has the Kings daughter, Michal, the beautiful girl who he married and brought him honour and envy.

And here he is sat out in the desert with a motley crew of soldiers having to resort being outlaws and raiders to survive.

The temptation is there: God has given up on me and I am never going to sit on the throne.

So I must take matters into my own hands and take the throne.

How. How to do it.

David does the unthinkable.

He forges an alliance with the Philistines, the enemy, the people whose hero he had killed.

I will join them, beat Israel in a battle and do it that way.

On the way, they hear some Israeli troops who are hunting for him so David and his gang hide in a cave.

The next thing they know is that Saul is in the mouth of the cave

having stopped for what I guess we would describe as a comfort break.

David’s men are whispering: “Go on. Now’s the moment: he’s all yours”.

Instead David creeps forward and with the same knife with which he could have slit Saul’s throat, he cuts off the end of his robe.

Saul, suitably relieved exits the cave to be followed by David waving a bit of cloth:

“Saul, I could have done it but I didn’t – why won’t you trust me?”

Within a few seconds, Saul had changed: Is that you, my son? All is forgiven – come back”

But within a few months Saul’s jealousy reared up and David was out of favour again.

Again he had an opportunity to kill Saul and didn’t.

And again Saul welcomed him home. And again Saul changed his mind.

And again, David decides to force the issue and forge an alliance with the Philistines.

But the Philistines had changed their minds and didn’t want David with them.

Instead, they went to war and defeated the Israelites in a massive rout.

Jonathan, David’s best friend, and Saul’s son was killed along with his brothers

and Saul fell on his sword rather than be captured.

And David became King.

Is that the way God really planned it for him?