

Life Groups in Central Telford Parish

Summer Term 2015 "Words of Life – The Letters of John"

Week beginning 24th May 2015

"Pentecost – Who Shall I Send?"

• The Aim of this Session

The instinctive response to the question "Who shall I send?" is, for many people, "Someone else". If we are the Body of Christ, then he has no hands but ours, and the parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25 is a chilling reminder for us of what happens when we fail in our responsibilities to be those hands. So how can say with confidence "Here am I, send me"?

• Welcome

Are you someone who enjoys taking a risk or prefers to stay safe at all costs – and why?

• Worship

Read Isaiah 6:1-8. Firstly, Isaiah is worshipping God when he sees this Vision. He takes in the scene (verses 2-4) before recognising that he is unworthy to be there. Secondly, Isaiah recognises the problem of his sin (v5) – this is a prophet of God, a man devoted to hearing God's voice and passing it on! Thirdly, he is open to receive God's forgiveness (vv6-7). And, fourthly, he is ready to respond to God's call (v8). Pray that you will be open to Worship, open to Recognise your sin, open to Forgiveness and open to Go in your time together.

• Word

- ❖ What is the point of breathing?
- ❖ What happens if we don't breathe?
- ❖ What happens if someone is unable to breathe fully?
- ❖ How do we breathe spiritually (think of the word *inspiration*)?
- ❖ Easy question time! What, or more correctly, who is the spiritual oxygen we need?
- ❖ What happens if we don't breathe spiritually?
- ❖ What happens if someone is unable to breathe fully spiritually?

Read Genesis 2:7 – The "breath of life" is in Hebrew *ruach*, the word for Spirit.

- What does this say about us as created beings?
- What does it say about God's intimacy?
- What does it say about our need for reliance on God (see Psalm 51:11)?

Read John 3:5 – Jesus is talking to Nicodemus about the idea of spiritual birth.

- How do you understand about the phrase "be born of the Spirit?"
- How does this connect to Genesis 2:7?

If you have time, read Romans 6:5-8, where Paul talks of identifying ourselves with Jesus on the Cross and that "old self was crucified with him" and that we are raised with him in the new life he offers.

Read John 20:22 – on the first Easter Sunday, as Jesus appears to his disciples in the upper room.

- Why does Jesus do what he does as his first action on meeting them?

Read Ephesians 4:4-13

- "One body and one Spirit" (v4). Based on this study so far, what is the relationship between the two?
- There are five other "one" statements in vv4-6. Why is this important?
- Particularly, why is this relevant to what Paul says in vv11-13?
- The key word is "all" – all are equipped and all are called!
- How does God "call" people (v11) and how does he equip them for the task?
- What is the dual purpose of the Gifts (v12)?
- ... but what does it depend on? Think back to Isaiah 6.
- What are the four elements to this Vision Statement for the Church in verse 13?

• Walk

The idea of the Holy Spirit is something that disturbs and scares some Christians because the idea of being born again in the Spirit (Jesus' words, not mine and not some American concept that the media hang onto) is one that requires us to let go and let God take control. So many people try to keep a foot in both worlds and wonder why they (and their Church) never seem to move towards the Vision of maturity that Paul describes in Ephesians 4:13. We have a simple choice – we can breathe in the air of this world, polluted by sin and the atmosphere of self-interest, or we can breathe in the pure, clean air of the Spirit and live lives of Spiritual abundance.

- ❖ If you can witness to an experience of what difference the Holy Spirit has made in your life, please share it with the group.

God does not train people up and equip them for works (Ephesians 4:11-12) for us to sit back and wait for someone else to go and do the job. **ALL** of us are given something to equip us and **ALL** of us are given a task to use these Gifts.

- ❖ What tasks is God calling you to perform, individually or as a group?
- ❖ Are there tasks that you sense God is leading you towards?
- ❖ Be bold to name them together.
- ❖ If you think God is calling someone in the group to a specific task – be bold and suggest it.
- ❖ Read Isaiah 6:8 and pray for the faith to follow this through.

• And Finally ...

In the coming week – look for the tasks God is giving you and see them as such, in the knowledge that he has already equipped you for them.

• Next Time ...

AWeek Away From John for Pentecost!

Father, Son and Holy Spirit ... but who is the Spirit?

