

In daily life - towards imitation

Here's a story or testimony to flesh this out...Andrew White, the vicar of Baghdad, on living in a place of danger: "It doesn't matter where you are if you are in God's will. That doesn't mean I'm not going to be shot or killed. I might be, but I'm where I'm supposed to be....My wife says she has never once worried about me. She has got a gift of God as well....Every day, all day, I (see) incredible things; angels, resurrections, and healings. Nobody would probably believe it if we told what our daily life was like. It is so wonderful."

STUDY QUESTIONS – EXPLORING THE INFORMATION (ABOUT 30 MINUTES)

1. 1 John 4:16-19. How does fear manifest itself in your life? And how do you deal with it?
2. Acts 16:6-10. Where is God calling you 'to make disciples'?
3. Where is God calling you to step out and exercise faith?

Living it out

Where is fear holding you back?

Prayer suggestion:

Please pray for the 275 girls kidnapped in Nigeria 6 months ago. Prayer resources are here. http://www.opendoorsuk.org/news/stories/nigeria_141015.php?ref=lnstorylnk Use the prayer diary in the new bulletin for October to pray for the church community.

Joining a group and other resources:

We encourage everyone to join a group if possible. We have daytime or evening groups and youth cells. If you would like to know more, please visit our website, or contact Guy on 01423 504160.

There are many great resources to help you pray and enjoy the Scriptures on a daily basis.

www.pray-as-you-go.org A 12 minute guided prayer and meditation to listen to.

<https://www.wordlive.org> Many excellent daily reading approaches, available as an app.

<http://www.sacredspace.ie/> A short guided prayer and meditation to read.

Or download the app from Soul Survivor, with short daily videos: <http://bible.soulsurvivor.com/>

INSPIRE

Everywhere...in everything



Week beginning: 19th October 2014.

Weekly discipleship and spiritual growth resources for all ages, groups and individuals. Follow up material on Sunday's teaching for groups and individuals.

GROWING AT HOME

Three suggested discipleship activities suitable for all ages to help you grow, based on up - to God; In - to each other; Out - to mission

Up

When you are together in one room, light a candle one evening, and switch off the electric lights. Look at the flame and remember: Jesus is the light of the world! Say together, "Thank you, God that in You there is no darkness at all."

In

Jesus said "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10) This Sunday the Yr 3s and 4s at Explorers are hearing about God's invitation in Jesus to join his party. Why not blow up some balloons and put them up to remind you that, through Jesus, God invites each of us to His party in heaven.

Out

The older children at Explorers are taking a stand for persecuted Arab Christians this weekend by having a **Blackout** (going without some form of communication or media e.g. speaking / TV). Please pray with them that persecuted Christians will keep trusting Jesus, and thank God for the freedom we enjoy.

DAILY READINGS AND PRAYERS.

These daily readings are the same as the ones used in church every morning from 9 - 9.30. Feel free to join us, or use them at home. Read one or both of the readings asking yourself, "What is God saying to me, personally?" and, "How can I respond today?" If you are pressed for time there is a focus verse from the passages. Try reading the verse slowly, three or four times, allowing God to shape your heart and mind through His word. You can use these together with our daily prayer diary from the monthly newssheet.

Monday 20th October

Readings: Psalm 80, Acts 26: 1-23. Focus verse: 22 But God has helped me to this very day; so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen – 23 that the Messiah would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would bring the message of light to his own people and to the Gentiles.'

Tuesday 21st October

Readings: Psalm 87, Acts 26: 24-end. Focus verse: 28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, 'Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?' 29 Paul replied, 'Short time or long – I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.'

Wednesday 22nd October.

Readings: Psalm 119: 105-128, Acts 27: 1-26. 22 But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. 23 Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me 24 and said, "Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you." 25 So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

Thursday 23rd October

Readings: Psalm 90, Acts 27: 27-end. Focus verse: "Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head.' 35 After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. 36 They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves.

Friday 24th October.

Readings: Psalm 88, Acts 28: 1-16. 7 There was an estate near by that belonged to Publius...His father was ill in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. 9 When this had happened, the rest of those on the island who were ill came and were cured.

Saturday 25th October

Readings: Psalm 96, Acts 28: 17-end. Focus verse: 30 For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. 31 He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ – with all boldness and without hindrance!

SUNDAY'S TEACHING: RESOURCES FOR GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS.

First thoughts:

Last week we asked, "How free are you when it comes to money?" Who has inspired you with their attitude to money?

This week's teaching in a nutshell:

Jesus' Last words – Before and After (Matt 28:16-20 John 20:19-23)

Julia and I have recently started leaving our kids on their own, if we go out on our own. Just before we leave we give our final words of instruction, just so all will run smoothly while we are away. As a parent those last words of advice are important. Jesus gives his last words of instruction to his disciples before he ascends to heaven. I want us to see a snapshot of before and after in the life of the disciples. I want us to see if "Jesus" really works. Even "if individual results vary".

Before (Jesus' last words): Jesus has risen from the dead. He has appeared to Mary, Mary Magdalene and Salome and they report what they have seen to the eleven disciples. The eleven fail to believe. Jesus appears to Cleopas and another disciple on the road to Emmaus. When Jesus finally reveals himself they rush off to tell the eleven disciples that Jesus is alive. And yet the eleven still doubt. The eleven don't know what has happened to Jesus' body but they believe he is dead and they are terrified what has happened to him will happen to them. In John 20:19 the disciples are in a room with the doors locked. They are living in fear of what the Jews will do to them. While they are hiding Jesus appears and gives them proof he is alive.

After (Jesus' last words): Matt 28:16-17 - "Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted." While on the mountain the disciples still had doubts and yet they worshipped. Doubt and faith can co-exist and still lead to a life of love and obedient service. If I was to ask you what is the opposite of faith, I expect many would say 'doubt'. However I think that the opposite of faith is fear. Fear binds us up, it immobilizes us and holds us prisoner. Fear takes away our freedom and prevents us being who we were created to be, it prevents us doing what we were made to do.

Fear hinders faith, not doubt. We all have doubts. It's natural, God understands. But doubt will grow into fear. Doubt of Jesus' resurrection had turned to fear and kept the eleven hidden in an upper room. If you have doubts today, we want to encourage you to worship anyway. God is strong enough to support us, even when we doubt He can. If Jesus is dead, we have reason to hide in fear. BUT If Jesus is alive; we have authorization for the mission. We have been given an assignment to accomplish while Jesus is away. These are Jesus' last words (Matt 28:19-20). And the commission starts with "GO!". Where is Jesus calling you 'to make disciples'?