

REAL CHRISTIANITY w/b 18 Jan 2015

Read 2 Corinthians 11:1-15

Discovery

Paul was really keen that the gospel should not be perverted, or messed about with. There were Jewish Christians around who were requiring people to be circumcised, and to observe particular feast days, and to dress in particular ways. There were some people called gnostics who said that the spirit and the body were separate and so it was OK to do what ever you like with your body.

Get someone who knows the story of Cornelius and Peter to tell it in their own words (it is quite a long passage in Acts 10 and 11 so probably best not to read it out). Key verses show that though Cornelius was a devout man who believed in God and gave money to the poor, he had to be introduced to Jesus to be saved - see Acts 10:4, 36, 43 and Acts 11:14.

Paul uses a particular Greek word for 'time' in Ephesians 6:18. It is Kairos, which suggests a 'now time' or, as some translations put it a now 'occasion'. The idea is "now is the time" for something.

Discussion

What is the gospel?

Why was Paul worried it was being messed about with?

What would have happened to Cornelius if Peter had said no?

A Salvation Army trumpeter was once asked if he could play his trumpet a little more quietly. He replied that he was so full of Joy about what Jesus had done for him that he wanted to 'blow his jolly trumpet out straight'!

How full of joy are you about what Jesus has done for you?

Will God accept people into his kingdom who haven't heard of Jesus? What about those who haven't had the opportunity to hear about him?

Consider the idea of the time being right for a particular move of God - a 'kairos' time. It could be a time for healing, or for someone to come to salvation, or for something that is wrong to be put right. If there is a 'right' time for something to happen, how should we be praying in the days and months leading up to it? If this seems a bit weird or theological for your group, don't dwell on it.

Application

Get people to say how their relationship with Jesus is right now. Challenge each other to move into a more radical, joy filled love for Jesus. Talk about how you can do that. If you like, you could read out Colossians 1:15-20 to inspire people.

Consider any friends or family you are particularly wanting to bring to faith in Jesus. Talk about your relationship with them and think what your witness to them is like and how you might be able to do it even better. Think about how you pray for them, and ask God to show you how to pray, how to witness, and how to serve them.

Then pray.