

Home Group Study Notes - 27/10/19

Holy Spirit - Prayer

Icebreaker

Have you ever felt you really knew God's will for you or about something important? How did you know? (it could be: a bible promise made really clear; something small or really big; an urge, audible voice, dream etc).

Discovery

Read John 14:26 & 16:12-14 re Jesus' explanation of why he had to go to heaven, and what the Holy Spirit would do when he came down from Heaven. Chat about this.

Using a concordance or a search on your bible apps have a look through the new testament for 'Spirit' to see the things he did in NT times and still does for us today. Examples:

- Mark 1:12 - sent Jesus into the wilderness
- John 15:26 - Spirit of truth, testifying about Jesus
- Acts 6 - gave wisdom as he spoke
- Acts 13:2 - spoke - "set apart Barnabus and Paul.."
- Acts 15:28 - Gives his opinions - re what is best to do
- Acts 16:6,7 - prevented Paul from preaching.. and entering Bythinia
- Acts 20:23 - warns us (of hardship for Paul in Jerusalem)
- Ro 8:4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 23, 26, 27 - helps us in our weakness, prays for us/through us
- 1 Cor 2:10-13 - reveals things
- Eph 1:17 - gives wisdom and revelation, and helps us know God better.
- Jude 1:20 - empowers and prompts our praying - 'pray in the Spirit'
- Instructed Peter ("3 men will come soon. Go with them.") and Peter ("Go to that chariot.")

Discussion

Discuss which of these above might be considered to be prayer activities. You'll probably need to decide what you think prayer is. (2 way conversation between God and his people?). Hopefully you'll be amazed at the number of them that are prayer.

So if that's the case, how much of our time during the day could we be spending in prayer? (hint - 24hrs?). In his talk on Sunday Mike suggested we could live so that we 'become our prayers'. Huh!? What was he talking about? Could he be right?

Mike suggested that if we are to be in step with the Spirit as we go through our days, we need to know him really well. And so maybe our time 1-2-1 with God at the beginning of the day - our 'quiet times' (some people spend time at the end of the day instead) are times to be getting to know him really well, rather than times just to be lifting up prayers for our lives and for others (vital though that is - but it could be done at other times as we think about them during the day).

Consider the idea that God wants us to spend quality time with him, meditating on what the bible has to say about him, and how much he likes and loves us and wants to be involved in our lives and use us. As we do this, he promises to transform us into faith filled people of power who carry his presence with us wherever we go. We walk truly 'in step with the Spirit' (Galatians 5:26), doing the things Jesus did, with his authority, building his kingdom with him as we go.

An Old Testament take on this. If you want to look at the OT for a word on all of this you could have a look at Psalm 16. Verses 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 11 apply particularly.

When our ideas of what the Spirit says differ! (If you like, and have time). Have a look at Paul's compulsion from the Spirit to go to Jerusalem and the apparent opposite leading from the Spirit his good friends had about that, read Acts 20:22-25 and 21:1-14 (particularly vs 4 & 14).

Why might 2 people have opposite 'leadings' from the Spirit? (hint: it depends on our sensitivity to the Spirit, knowledge and interpretation of the bible, knowledge of prophecies etc given by trusted people, personal preferences, ideas of what God sees as important). What should be done in such situations? (humility, yielding, prayer...).

Application

Would people be willing to go through 'the Prayer Course' and / or read 'How to Pray' by Pete Greig. Our Father in heaven looks for people who seek his face and pray (2 Chron 7:14). You could do the prayer course in your groups - it's all internet based and free! Or a few of you could do it at other times. It's 8 weeks long, and just needs an hour a week. The elders would be happy if you decided to do it in your weekly get togethers.

Pray for each other - to hear from the Spirit what he'd like you to do about all this.

God bless you as you spend time together.

Mike