

Home Group study week beginning 27th January 2020

Walk in the Spirit: day by day

Have you ever been in a situation where you had no idea what to do?
How did you handle it and what was the outcome?

Read:

Proverbs 3 v5:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

Philippians 1 v19:

I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.

Understanding

In what ways do we 'lean on our own understanding'?

The writer of Proverbs warns us not to do this. What are the pitfalls of 'leaning on our own understanding'? Does anyone in the group have an experience they can share of getting in a bit of a mess by relying on their own understanding?

What does it mean to trust in the Lord? And how do we interpret 'with all your heart'? (Try to spend a bit of time discussing this.) Does anyone in the group have a testimony of having trusted in the Lord with all their heart (or even trusted in the Lord just a little bit!) and seen God work through it?

The Philippians verse was written by Paul when he was in prison, probably when he was under house arrest in Rome towards the end of his life. He clearly knows that God will deliver him through prayer and the Holy Spirit, though he doesn't know what form that deliverance will take. It could be through death: he goes on to say 'For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain' (v21). Discuss why prayer and the Holy Spirit together will deliver him. Isn't the Holy Spirit alone sufficient to deliver him? What difference does prayer make? If prayer and the Holy Spirit working in partnership could deliver Paul, could the same partnership deliver us, living in London's outer suburbia in 2020?

Application

On Sunday we heard some amazing testimony from Ian Westerman about how God helped him through six months in Afghanistan when he was carrying a huge responsibility for which he was totally ill-equipped. He described the experience as 'just a problem I had and got God to help. The only thing to do was pray'. Can we say the same of our circumstances? How easily do we turn to prayer as the solution to our problems?

Ian's circumstances may have seemed a bit extreme, but he was taking life one day at a time with God's help and intervention. How can we see the Holy Spirit work in our lives day by day, even when our lives seem a bit more mundane?

Ian agreed with Paul that it was the combination of the Holy Spirit and prayer that was so powerful and bringing about miracles for him as he struggled day by day with knowing how to deal with situations and ensure the men under his command were kept safe. In such a volatile situation one slip either way could have been catastrophic. How do we ensure that our prayers and the intervention of the Holy Spirit keep us on track in day-by-day situations? Do we believe in our hearts that God can intervene in such a miraculous way for each of us? Is there a danger of us missing what God is doing by expecting him to act in a particular way in our own particular situations? How can we avoid that danger?

Pray

For situations in people's lives that need a miraculous solution from God and pray that we have the faith to see him act miraculously.

Please continue to pray for Alpha.

Pray too for our elders, who are having a weekend away on Friday and Saturday. Pray that God will knit our new eldership team together in a special way and that He will give them clear vision for the church to move on in God's purposes.