

Home Group study: week beginning 30th March 2020

Staying in touch with God: 2. Enjoying God's Word

What's your favourite verse (or passage) of scripture? What does that scripture say to you? Try to think of an occasion when a scripture has refreshed you. What was that scripture (it can be the one you've said is your favourite or it can be another one) and how did it affect you? Does it continue to affect your life today?

Read: 2 Timothy 3: 16-17, Psalm 19: 7-11

In 2 Timothy 3: 16, the NIV describes scripture as 'God-breathed'. What do you understand that to mean? What is scripture 'useful' for? (Some versions say 'profitable' rather than 'useful'.) V17 says that scripture ensures that 'the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work'. How does Paul also describe scripture's part of the full armour of God (Ephesians 6: 10-18)? What does that say about the importance of knowing God's word?

What words does David use instead of 'scripture' or 'word' in Psalm 19: 7-9? Those terms seem a bit stronger than Paul's description of scripture as 'useful'!

Understanding

As Christians we are no longer under the law, yet David is describing scripture in 'legalistic' terms. On Sunday Dave said there's a danger of thinking of scripture as 'a bit like vegetables'; we may not like vegetables but we still have to eat them, either to fend off scurvy or because our Mums wouldn't give us any pudding till we'd finished them. So what should our attitude to God's word be? Is it something we have to consume just because we're told it will do us good? Something we have to treat as rules and regulations? Or something else?

The law of the land may be a bit tedious to us. We may all have had visions of boiling traffic wardens in oil (if so, you may need to repent...). But what are the effects of the 'law' spelt out in each sentence in vv7-9? Does that put a different perspective on why we should study God's word?

We can sum up the list of 'law, statutes, precepts, commands, ordinances' as the Word of God. How then is the Word of God described in vv10, 11? What does that say to us about the value of immersing ourselves in God's word?

Application

Dave talked about the way his relationship with his granddaughter changed as she began to get to know him, recognise him and trust him: from being a bit frightened of him she now laughs and smiles when she sees him and completely trusts him. Dave told us: 'The more we spend time with our heavenly father the more we can feel comfortable and in touch with him.' Do you find reading the word of God hard work and heavy going? Do you read it out of a sense of duty? Or have you even given up trying? Is reading the word the same as 'spending time with our heavenly father'? If so, does it help you feel closer to God?

Dave reminded us of the importance of 'recharging our batteries' by 'plugging into God's word'. He said that too many Christians 'run on empty', just giving themselves enough of a charge to keep going. Are you 'running on empty'? How can you use this time of isolation to recharge?

This is what Dave said about reading the word of God:

'One of the best ways to get to know God better is allowing him to engage with us as we read his word. Not as an academic exercise, but communicating and engaging in relationship with our heavenly father. We can experience a joy in our hearts, a light in our eyes and a spring in our step as we read about God's:

- Grace
- Mercy
- Beautiful plan of salvation
- Sending of his son
- Adoption of us into his family
- Our status in him
- Eternity:

The list goes on.'

How can we ensure we avoid reading scripture as a dry, academic exercise? Undertake to spend some time each day over the next week to read through a book, or part of a book, of the Bible and as you do so think about each of the things on Dave's list. Let God speak to you, and take time to contemplate on how the words you have read reveal more of your heavenly father to you.

(Copies of this study are available on the Church website, www.jubileechurchshepperton.org, 'Grow' tab, Home Group Notes, if you need the list to refer to.)