

Life Group Notes - 21st February 2016



Living Values: Prayerfulness

Key Passage: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

This Sunday morning's sermon focused on Paul's trifold exhortation to '*Rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances.*'

Key points included:

- 1) The recognition that Paul often spoke in threes to create emphasis. Eggs include:
'Faith, hope and love' (1 Cor 13)
'I have fought the good fight, finished the race, kept the faith' (2 Tim 4:7)
'Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.' (Romans 12:12)
- 2) Rejoicing focuses above the day to day and recognises the privileges of being 'in Christ'
- 3) Continual prayer is an attitude to be cultivated and can impact every part of our lives, so that we're in constant communion with God.
- 4) We give thanks **in** all circumstances not **for** all circumstances
- 5) All of this is not 'Paul's good idea' – He describes it as God's will for us in Christ Jesus
- 6) This is a community responsibility – Paul's letter is to the church not just to an individual. We need to encourage one another in a life of prayer.

How do you respond when you reflect on the Apostle Paul's call to prayer?

When you face difficulties where are you most likely to turn for solace? Where does this passage encourage us to look?

Take time to reflect on the rest of the passage and discuss the implications.

What is your reaction to the paraphrased quote from Richard Foster's book on prayer:

"We yearn for prayer and hide from prayer. We are attracted to it and repelled by it...What holds us back...is the notion that we have to have everything 'right' in order to pray".

In what sense is this true for you?

Ask each group member to share one practical way in which they seek to engage with God in prayer. Discuss some of the challenges to a committed prayer life, how might these be overcome?

How might the core value of prayerfulness be more fully expressed in the life of the Christ Church Community and in any groups which you are a part of? Think particularly about this life group?

Take time to pray together – putting in to practice Paul's exhortation to '*Rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances.*'