

Small Group notes for April 23rd 2017

Recap Sunday!

Readings: John 20: 19-29 1Cor:15-17

Starter What particular pre-Easter or Easter message this year, impacted upon you?

Outline with questions

Steve summarized and examined the significance of the three previous sermons with the build up to Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Palm Sunday and Easter itself.

Chris Musther John 15: 1-15 I am the vine.
We were reminded of the context of Jesus speaking in the upper room and telling his disciples things they did not want to hear.

I am the vine and if you REMAIN in me.....mentioned 8 times.
Significant; vineyard farmers understood this as did the prophets. Thus Jesus referring to himself as the vine was quite clear to people. Fruitfulness comes from the source of being in Christ. We are asked to remain in, abide in and to actively be dependent on Christ.

What does our dependence look like?

We were shown a video of the Browning brothers, and one being dependent on the other at the end of the race.

Therefore what do people see in us? Can people say about our church, "I have never seen anything like that!"

Claire Rose Palm Sunday Matt 21:9
"Hosanna to the son of David."

Because of the Passover there was an influx of visitors into the city of Jerusalem, which resulted in greater Roman occupying forces. The contrast of Jesus arriving on a donkey was great. However the expectations of the crowd were disappointed and within a few days they changed allegiance. Love turned to hate. The fickleness of man contrasted to the steadfastness of God.

Jesus knew the agony of a painful death and separation from his Father.

Who would we have followed?

(Or would we have struggled with privately torn loyalties?)

Ali Creasey Easter Sunday Matt 28:1-10

We were given details of research by the BBC.

A quarter of British Christians do not identify with the resurrection.

57% of those who regularly attend church do not believe Jesus rose from the dead.

Does this matter?

Bible references in all four Gospels refer to the women going to the tomb. (In those days the evidence of women was not thought to be very trustworthy.)

There was a violent earthquake and an angel moved a tombstone and sat on it. The tomb was empty.

The angel spoke to the women, (who were not used as witnesses in court.)

We were reminded that Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus in addition to him appearing to his disciples after his death of the cross. For these witnesses it was real.

Does this matter?

The resurrection gives us hope, making us who we are because of what Jesus has done for us in our lives.

Resurrection is the Christian word for defiance.

So what does that mean for today?

Paul wrote to various churches sharing the good news and encouraging those he had left there as leaders.

Eg. 1Cor 15:1-7

V 7 Then he appeared

He was writing to Timothy who was in charge of the church in Ephesus.

People will have a form of Godliness but deny the power. **(Is this the 57%.)**

Where are we in our beliefs?

How can we continue to build up our church?

Note to groups

This week's format with questions interspersed I hope gives continuity. I suggest that it is read through as usual and then read again with the questions addressed as they arise. Groups might wish to choose which areas they find of particular relevance.

Prayers.

Ken prayed the God's spirit will be felt in any situation.

May we pray this in our groups and that God's presence and voice will be felt in the darkest of places, and that His kingdom will flourish.