

Word notes Sunday 13/12/09 DT Braven-Giles
Missio Dei – the “Sending” of God

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Text: Luke 15:11-31, Parable of the lost son, NB v 20

DT underlined v 20 of the well-known passage: while the son was still a long way off the father ran to him. This underlines the character of our heavenly Father, that while we were still a long way from Him, He ran to meet us in his own Son. This then is God’s mission, to meet with us while we are still far off.

That word “mission” (from the Latin: missio, to send, the same meaning as New Testament Greek apostolo) may mean something slightly different to us when we change the verb to an noun: missionary. We may see a missionary as someone who goes away to a far off place, somewhere other than where we are and while that is truly part of God’s mission it loses the understanding that we too can be “sent” by God because God also wants to meet with people in our community.

DT’s Gran told him “A missionary is not someone who crosses the sea but someone who sees the cross” which reminds us that first of all we should start with God, the primary “sender” of Good News. Rather than think of where we feel the Gospel needs to be preached then ask God to bless it, we should first look to the cross and understand that wherever we go, He has already been there. Then we can ask how we can get involved.

Secondly we should not be deterred by our weaknesses but look to God and the work He has done through His Son on the cross. DT may have been discouraged about following an academic career in theology if he’d known beforehand about how dyslexia might hinder him instead we should all know that it is in God’s strength not our own that we can follow His call.

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

DT started his talk with a Question: “Why are you here?” He was not asking us to solve the fundamental questions of life, the universe and everything, but more why it was, how we came to be in a church meeting praising God rather than out doing all the other things folk do on a Sunday morning.

What is your answer to that question?

Read through the passage from Luke 15 then go through the following:

What were the high points and low points for the lost son?

What were the high and low points for the father?

What was the lost son’s status after his return?

In 1st Century middle eastern culture a father would not run anywhere, least of all out to meet a wayward son who should come to his dad in humility (as the son in the story intended to do). What do the father’s actions tell us about the character of God as a father.

The story conveys a number of truths about the nature of man, God’s heart and the restoring work of Christ. What stands out most for you?

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

Where might God send you – as a Cell group is there a place or people you can reach out to?

Each of us has a different part to play in reaching out. Some are great at befriending, others at delivering the gospel, some in intercession. What roles can each play in the mission of the Cell?