

Word Notes Sunday 19/02/17
Tony Hodge – NCC United: Play your position

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday, listen to the podcast if you missed the talk <http://www.newmarketcommunitychurch.co.uk/podcasts.htm>)

Key Text: Ephesians 2:11-4:16, main teaching passage 3:14 – 4:16

Through Jesus God has called us from all walks of life to be “one new man”. To help us he has given each our own “gifts” so that by working as a team, building each other up, we can win the match – we can be like Him. With the Love of Jesus inside we can win. Paul’s prayer is that we should know that with Jesus in our hearts all things are possible – more than we can imagine.

How?

I - New Team Uniform (4:1-6)

Our team uniform is not made of earthly clothes but spiritual. Ga 3:27 says: “For all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” We look different from the world because of the Christ-ness inside: Humble, gentle, patient, bearing each other in love. What is it that holds us together? We are “One Body, One Spirit, One Lord, One Faith, One baptism, One God and Father of us all.” The Body of Christ looks different, acts different, speaks different.

Play to your position – a member of team Jesus!

II - New Team Equipment (4:7-12)

Just as in history an earthly victor received gifts as he led captives in a victory parade, so now we, sharing in Christ’s victory, share also in the gifts – we are not the captives we are the victors! We are more than conquerors (Rom 8:37) so be encouraged, not discouraged - see Paul’s comment on his ministry in Eph 3:1-13. What are these gifts for? To prepare the people for works, to build up the body, to grow into unity of faith and attain the full measure of Christ. Here are listed the “five-fold ministries” of the church: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers. To the list in Ephesians Paul adds others. In Romans 12:3-8 are gifts of serving, encouragement, giving, leading and mercy with the instruction to apply with grace and faith. In 1 Cor 12:27-3, after the well-known section of the body working together, Paul adds miracles, healing, helping, administration (guidance in NIV), tongues and interpretation of tongues with encouragement to eagerly desire the higher gifts.

Play your position – gifted and resourced to perform.

III - Win the Match (4:13-16)

“THEN – we will no longer be like children but wise not to be deceived. Enabled to speak the truth in love growing into Him who is the head and holds all together: body, ligaments each part doing its job.” This is the goal that Team Jesus is aiming for. Find your role, then play to your utmost.

Play your position – “Winners”

Yet remember - in life things change.

Don’t feel stuck in a rut. Who you are aged 16, 30, 45, 60 may change as you develop and grow. Be prepared to change position for the benefit of the team.

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

1, How does your “new uniform” fit? Is living out your Christ-like-ness easy or hard?

Discuss how we can all grow into our new clothes, with reference to verses 12-16 of chapter 4.

2, What “equipment” have you been given, do you know your gifting?

Discuss the ways you might discover your role in the body – Tony mentioned these:

- Revelation – direct from the Lord or via another.
- What “feels right” - who you are, what you naturally enjoy.
- Testing eg Spiritual gifts survey – examples available on NCC website:

Adults: <http://tinyurl.com/ht9xt5u>

Youth: <http://tinyurl.com/jyis8jp>

- “Give it a go”

Continued over

Share any revelations, words or wisdom each may have on finding and moving in your gifting.

3, Pray for each other to know our position in Christ and in the body and for the energy and commitment to play our part to the full.

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

These talks are very much about NCC being united in our relationships and purpose, reliant on God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. How does that benefit our call to mission in the world? What place do spiritual gifts have beyond our cosy meetings?