

Word Notes Sunday 05/01/14
Tony Hodge – Preach the Gospel

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

Key Texts: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

This passage contains Paul's last instructions to Timothy, things he wanted to make sure Timothy would continue to do as he carried on the mission given to Paul than passed on to himself. Here are three points to draw from Paul's words:

1) The Gospel is found in Scripture.

- a) Timothy knew the scriptures. Like Joshua he would have been exhorted "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." Joshua 1:8
- b) He knew those who taught it to him. Our words are given weight by our lives – who would you believe: someone you know personally or some random person on the internet?
- c) The word made him "wise for salvation". Our deeds, actions, showing the love of Christ all commend our words, yet it's the Word of God that brings knowledge of salvation.

2) Preach the Word. Paul is quite clear that the Word of God should be preached.

- a) Be prepared. As well as bringing life to ourselves, getting into the Word prepares us to share the Good News with others. "All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."
- b) In season and out of season. Paul is saying when the ground is ready AND when it's not. When it's acceptable and when it's not, even where and with whom? Paul certainly knew about that: chased out of towns, arrested, beaten, and at the time of writing imprisoned awaiting death.
- c) Correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction.
 - i) Whom? Timothy was a church leader with responsibility for part of the flock.
 - ii) How? Great patience and careful instruction. Matthew 18:15-17. Nobody wants confrontation, but nobody should to avoid it at all costs either.

3) Keep to sound doctrine.

- a) Sound doctrine. In the commitment course we set out the doctrinal position of NCC. We identify what we believe to be "foundational truths" (our Statement of Faith) and while noting that there are "disputable matters" as Paul puts it (Rom 14:1). We need to know which is which.
- b) Not suiting our own desires. When the Pope says: *"The Church sometimes has locked itself up in small things, in small-minded rules. The most important thing is the first proclamation: Jesus Christ has saved you."* He meant just that – not that we can be liberal about everything else.
- c) Who do we listen to – a "great company" of like-minded people or do we test each teaching against the Word?

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

Paul was writing to Timothy, a church leader he had placed in a local church. Are Paul's words for "leaders" alone? Why should we all see "preaching the word" as a personal responsibility?

Paul says that Timothy's knowledge of the Word made him "wise for salvation". Why is that important in the context of preaching the Word?

How do we keep to "sound doctrine" – that is how do we decide what are the non-negotiable truths and which are "disputable matters"? NB that the things Paul talks about in Romans 14 as "disputable" might be restrictions or requirements found in the Old Testament, ie "scriptural".

Read Matt 23:23-28 How do Jesus' words compare with the new Pope's comments (3b above). What message can we take from both?

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

What is your Cell vision for outreach in 2014?