

Word notes Sunday 20/01/2013 Roy Wheeler
God's ways are not our ways

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

Key Texts: Isaiah 55:8

God's ways seem like foolishness because we are so different (Corinthians 1:18-25). The Wise men arrived at a normal home even though they expected to see a king born in royal palace. God chose an odd place to come and be among people and still does the same today. For instance in 1906 Los Angeles, at 321 Azusa Street (a "dead end" street) there were life changing encounters which still echo around the world! In January 1994 in a warehouse at end of a runway at Toronto airport - God turned up! God likes a bit of wildness and noise sometimes.

Nazareth was an obscure town of which it was said: "can anything good come out of that?" At Azusa Street the leader was a black man with a glass eye and many people received fantastic healings there. In Toronto there were divorced leaders who had remarried - by many people this was unthinkable for leaders at that time. All through history God chooses unlikely people with flaws: Moses, Balaam, Rahab, David, Elisha, Esther. In the New Testament: Nathanael, Peter, Levi, Saul, Anna the elderly widow.

In Judges 6 economic crisis had hit the nation, much like we see around us. Then, as now, Satan was trying to undermine a nation's moral standing. Israel gradually wised up and looked to God and we need to do the same. In Judges 6:7-10 God didn't respond the way they expected but reminded them of His laws. So God chose Gideon who had a least three major weaknesses:

1, He was fearful. The Angel of The Lord (a Christophany) came to him while he was hiding in a wine press. Do you hide your talents, are you afraid to speak out on a Sunday morning? Jesus says you are a mighty warrior. God saw Gideon's potential, God thinks better about you than you do yourself – He says fear not 366 times in the bible!

2, He was full of doubts. The Angel of The Lord was in front of Gideon and yet he says IF The Lord is with us, IF you will save me, IF god will speak to me – The Angel of The LORD is standing in front of him! There wasn't a quick fix, Gideon needed faith.

3, He had low self esteem and could not believe that God could use him. If God can use Gideon He can use YOU - you can make a difference for God

Roy's own example was of being rejected from birth. His mum wanted a girl and when he was born she said "take it back". Roy was not allowed to sit the 11+ and can't speak a foreign language but God chose Roy to visit the nations. Roy's Dad was only a dustman and still God used him.

Are you fearful or full of doubt or with poor self image? There is fresh hope for you today! God sees you and calls you by name. He loves you and rejoices over you with singing! He chooses the unlikely to be his people to touch the world.

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

Who would you vote for as the Bible's most unlikely hero?

Why do you think God used them (or any of those in the lists above) rather than those whom the world might choose? How do we judge those whom God calls?

Read 1 Tim 3:1-15. How do Paul's instructions on the character traits of elders and deacons sit alongside the examples we've discussed? Is there a conflict, what is the root issue in all cases?

What stops you from being all that God intends you to be?

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

How can you get the message that God loves people over to those that don't know Him?