

Word notes Sunday 22/01/2012 Thea Geach
Have a Heart for God

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

Key Text: 2 Chron 16:9 “For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.”

God’s heart is for those who have a heart for him. In the Old Testament we read about many “Heroes of the Faith” – people whom God chose to do difficult things and while they may have struggled or fallen here and there because their heart was for God and set on His purposes in their lives God was able to use them for great things. The list in Hebrews 11 contains many such examples.

Moses followed God’s call yet doubted His power to help him speak persuasively yet through the rough times of moaning and complaining by the people Moses stayed true. Like Abraham he “did not receive the things promised; [but] only saw them and welcomed them from a distance.” (Heb 11:13).

God chose David to be king in place of Saul because he was “a man after his own heart”. Even so David sinned in adultery and then murder to cover it up, yet when confronted with his sin his response was repentance – evidence of his true heart for God. Saul had instead sought to exalt himself.

In the New Testament, Peter who had received this amazing revelation of Jesus being the Christ, the Messiah who was ready to fight with a sword at his arrest went on to deny Jesus. After his resurrection Jesus restored the man whose heart was so passionately for him by giving him the chance to repent and proclaim his love for Jesus.

Perhaps we don’t face the same issues but do fall to asking of God “where are you” in our times of trouble, or maybe we too have comforters like Job’s who say “if God were with you how come this has happened”.

The “Heroes of the faith” in Heb 11 persevered after God; stormy times may test our faith but read to the end of the chapter. Do not grow weary and lose heart!

Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. When things get tough, when you don’t not what to do the one thing you can do is to keep your eyes on God and he will show the way.

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

When trials come what is your first reaction? – Be honest, if Gideon can say “why me I’m the least of the least?” yet still be recorded as a hero so can we!

The important thing is not so much what we feel but what we do – a decision that comes from the heart. Ask if any can share how they walked that tightrope of “where is God” vs faith and trust in Him. What did they learn and how has that encouraged others?

Read Heb 11:13-16. We may pray and ask God to be faithful so that we might not be put to shame but has it ever occurred to you that Father might be ashamed to be called our God? From what we’ve heard on Sunday how do you think we might cause God to be ashamed in this way?

Read 2 Chron 6:14. What is the condition for God to keep His covenant?

What does it mean in your life to wholeheartedly follow God’s way?

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

How would you tell your story of standing firm in God through times of trial, knowing His love, care and provision in those times to encourage believers and non-believers alike? NB – this isn’t a rhetorical question, watch out for a request coming from the Pastor soon to do just this thing.