

Word notes Sunday 23/1/2011 Thea Geach
The Age of Grace

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

Key Text: Isaiah 61:1,2 & Luke 4:18,19

The story of God's relationship with His creation, and in particular men & women - those created in God's own image is the theme that runs throughout the Bible. It starts at the beginning in creation and ends with the triumphant return of God's Son, Jesus and the establishment of the new heaven and earth. In regard to the Jewish nation and the current times we are in an "Age of Grace" during which the judgement of God on the nation of Israel is stayed. Thea said that the prophetic clock, marking out what God says he will do in the nation of Israel as a result of their turning away from Him, has been stopped with Jesus death some seven years short of "trouble", only to be restarted on Jesus return.

Grace in that the coming day of vengeance (Is 61:2) is not yet here, while the day of the Lord's favour is (Is 61:1 & Luke 4:19), Grace too in that because of Jesus the way has been made open for all who would make him Lord of their lives to have relationship with Father God restored – and not just Jews but Gentiles too.

What does that mean for us, living in the "Age of Grace"? Thea offered an acrostic based on "Our Father" to help us:

- **O** – occupy. Don't abdicate from the world waiting for the day but be in it, doing the Father's business. (Lk 19:13, Jn 9:4).
- **U** – under cover. Not as secret agents, hidden from view but as those covered with all the armour of God. (1 Thess 5:8, Eph 6:11-18).
- **R** – ready. Be alert to the times, prepared not taken up in worldly things (Matt 24:42-50, Mk 13:28-39, Lk 21:28-36, 1 Cor 15:51-54, Lk 14:16-24).
- **Father** – At the time amongst the Jews it was the father who tells the groom when the house is ready and for him to fetch his bride. (Jn 14:2-3).

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

Read through the scriptures given after each of the above bullet points. Discuss each in turn and what they mean to how we live our Christian walk.

There is a year of favour and a day of vengeance.

- What does this tell us about God's intent towards people?
- How do we explain the times to non-Christians?

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

The first part of this year is shaping up to be a time to proclaim the Gospel in Newmarket. There are two big evangelistic events at the upper school in March/April:

7pm 19th March "Tough Talk" - guys from the world of sport sharing their faith at Newmarket College
www.tough-talk.com

7pm 2nd April - All Saints have some partners from the US over to help encourage mission who will do a full-on classical Gospel Meeting at the College.

Who might you invite – how can you get to the point of asking them?