

Word notes Sunday 3/1/10 Tony Hodge

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

Key Text: 1 Cor 2:1-5 & Luke 1:1-4

At this time of year it's good to reflect on the previous year and to look forward and seek the Lord for what he would have us use the time for in his plan.

A couple of words brought to NCC at the end of last year, from Tim Anderson and Roy Wheeler speaking at the Christian Academy, have spoken of worship, ministry and growth, of salvation and healings as we fix our eyes on Jesus.

In discussions with other members of the preaching team we've decided that, like Paul, we should be "resolved to know nothing except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2) and to do this by spending some time preaching from the Gospels – the primary source of revelation about Jesus. We want our message both in meetings and to those around us, like Paul's, to be "not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power." (vv 4 & 5).

Why the Gospels? Doesn't Paul give us good solid teaching in his letters? Yes, and at the same time to go back to the source, to eye witness accounts will help us "know the certainty of the things [we] have been taught" (Luke 1:4).

But this is not just for us. We have a message to bring to others around us. While our outreach over the past few years as a body has been low key, re-establishing our presence in the community now the time is right to be more overt in sharing the Gospel.

To do this we must continue to build bridges of love –through more directed activities alongside our Fun Days, things that directly meet even small needs of folk around us to show God's love and I'm asking each to put their minds to how we can express God's love directly in simple ways – something unexpected that will reach through people's hardened exterior to their hearts.

All this is no good if we're not ready to share the Good News. Jesus demonstrated God's love through healings and deliverance, through befriending the unloved, he taught about the Father and the Kingdom, then he laid down his life for all.

Likewise we can show God's love in practical ways, be ready to share the Good News and give of ourselves.

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

We need both Faith and Works in our lives to be fully rounded people of God. We need both the Word and the Spirit to see people's lives changed.

Our message is simple – no really it is! Ask one or two people to say what the Gospel Message is.

If possible show this video: http://www.tangle.com/view_video.php?viewkey=57b89216572c373fc2d1
(I have a DVD copy if that helps).

What questions that you've been asked before or expect to be asked again does the video answer? Has it helped you to be "prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have"?(1 Peter 3:15)

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

How might you use organised and random acts of kindness to bless people around you. Make sure they are things anyone can do. Discuss ideas, and how each can get involved. Share these with the leadership if they need wider involvement.