

Word Notes Sunday 26/03/17
Tony Hodge: Good News to Share 1 – Jesus Speaks to All

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday, listen to the podcast if you missed the talk <http://www.newmarketcommunitychurch.co.uk/podcasts.htm>)

Key Text: Matthew 4:23-5:1 (Also 5:1-7:29)

Jesus came and broke the ground for the Good News of the Kingdom. How did he do this and what can we apply to our own witness?

How Jesus Taught

Jesus taught The Word of God, in fact he WAS The Word, anything he did or said taught the Word. The miracles he performed underlined the Truth and gave it authority (Matt 4:23-5:1). His compassion for the lost and value he gave to the lowly in Matt 5:3-11 is a great summary of the whole law and goes deeper. It's not about the high and mighty but those who would be servants to all. His teaching brings a deeper understanding of The Law, namely: Spirit rather than letter, living rather than dead, freedom rather than religion (Matt 5:17-6:8 and etc.). Freedom and at the same time a bigger challenge? No Jesus comes with the promise that his yoke is easy and his burden light. The difference is the Law is now written on our hearts and the Holy Spirit within.

What does this mean?

The Good News of The Kingdom cuts across religious observance and practise to show the heart of Father God – that's one of the reasons why Jesus got up the nose of the teachers of the law. Nothing had changed (did not come to abolish) except a release from the impossible task of keeping it all (but to fulfil). Today it's the same Good News, the same antidote to religion, selfishness and death.

How do we share?

Preaching alone is not enough, demonstrate the truth of the gospel through works and do it personally. God had spoken for millennia, directly, through prophets, through Judges and through Kings but the people still wavered. With Jesus God takes the personal approach.

Miracles, in the form of praying for the sick, and acts of compassion and kindness break through the wall of indifference and self-sufficiency to reach the heart. Value the lost, the wounded, the excluded and marginalised.

Show the true nature of God in how you live. *"Let your light shine before men so they may praise your Father in heaven"* (Matt 5:16). "Think Different", "Come in the opposite spirit", go the extra mile (give him your coat) let goodness come from inside change not outside appearance.

Don't neglect The Word

Jesus Is The Word Incarnate, whatever he did, wherever he went, there was The Word. Now Jesus lives in you – go and do likewise remembering the Great Commission to: *"....go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* (Matt 28:19 7 20)

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

- 1) Jesus opens his ministry preaching in his home synagogue in Luke 4:16-21, setting the tone for his mission.
 - a) Discuss Jesus' mission statement in Luke in comparison to his Sermon on the Mount, especially Matthew 5:3-12.

You might like to think about these things

- b) How does one follow from the other?
- c) How does Jesus take the words of Isaiah and bring them to life?
- d) What do his words in Luke 4:21 mean to those listening, to you and to the World?

- 2) In Matthew 5:3-12 Jesus turns upside-down our worldly values of who is blessed by God, for example when you claim to be blessed because you have a good life, nice house, great job.
 - a) How does that compare with Jesus' teaching?
 - b) What things should we be doing to receive the blessings listed and how does that change our Christian witness?

- 3) Jesus attracts the crowds through a combination of teaching and miracles.
 - a) What purpose do miracles serve?
 - b) How does this combination of word and power support the teaching in the letter of James (Especially Jas 1:14-26)?
 - c) How does that work out in your witness?

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

As individuals, we can do something. As groups, we can come together to do even more to reach the lost. What works of compassion can your group do to break down the walls of indifference or hostility to the Good News? Some might be "one-off" others need to be sustained – think about both.