

Word notes Sunday 05/05/13 Tony Hodge
Repentance & Salvation

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

Key Texts: Matt 11:28-30 & Acts 2:36-40 (The Message)

Last week we talked about the problem – why there is a need for Good News, this week the solution. The result of us going our own way rather than God's is that our lives get weighed down with things that were never intended for us in God's plan. If we rely can see this and accept Jesus' offer to replace our heavy burden, or yoke in the first century idiom, then in return he will give us a burden that is easy and light. What's more when yoked with him – following his ways and commands – then we will be filled with Holy Spirit Power to enable us to do so – we won't have to make it on our own.

For Jesus' original audience, Jews in first century Palestine, the yolk of the Law was hard enough without the extra ordinances from the teachers and Pharisees. They in turn built themselves up as being so virtuous that ordinary folk could not hope to match them. Today there are many things which weigh on us – different things or desires that pull us away from God but never satisfy, so we see people chasing dreams in the rat race of life or trying to fulfil lusts of money, power, sex or other things. The result is so often disappointment, a need for more and yet never being satisfied, at peace or happy.

Jesus' answer is a radical change – to turn our lives around completely (to Repent) and follow him and his ways. This entails some humility – we have to acknowledge we are wrong and he is right, and be sorry for rebelling against God. We also have to change our ways rather than just going round a cycle of sin/repent/sin/repent. Thankfully when we do this Peter (Acts 2:38) and John (John 1:12) tells us that the Holy Spirit will come to support, encourage and empower us to live the Jesus way. So why not exchange that 75 litre mountain of a backpack for the 15 litre daypack of Christ – fill up on him day by day and be free to live the life God meant you to have.

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

What part did repentance play in your being saved? Ask some to share their testimonies from this perspective.

How is repentance more than just being sorry and why is that important for salvation?

Jesus offered an exchange of "yokes" or burdens. How is that Good News? What's so different about Jesus' "yoke"?

How can new share the difference this has made to us and the promise for all in a relevant way in 21st century UK?

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

Plan and organise activities for the Fun Day on May 27th. Report to Tony what you will do.