

Word notes Sunday 20/11/2011 Ken Baker
Losing Your Edge

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

Key Text: 2 Kings 6:1-7

When we are about the Lord's work problems do occur but as we see from this short account from Elijah's school for prophets, there is no miracle without a problem. The main problem was the lost axe-head and this led to subsidiary problems: the axe was borrowed which was a big deal in an iron age community; the work stopped; they could not fix the problem – a miracle was needed. From what they did we can get insight into how to deal with problems that arise in doing the Lord's work:

1. Start by admitting there was a problem. They needed to confess there had been a mistake and ask for God's help.
2. Identify where we lost our effectiveness, lost our "edge".
3. Recognise that Christ is the answer – some commentators see the stick as being symbolic for the cross and hence Christ.
4. Work with God's plan to restore the loss.

How can things go wrong? 1, Things do go wrong; 2, Carelessness – by not looking after our tools; "Thlipsis" – tribulation "stuff happens"; but in all God is still sovereign.

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

Have you lost your edge? This is a question we can ask ourselves individually to assess how are going on with God and doing His work. Discuss these questions:

What things in our lives would help us to see if we had "lost our edge" – for example things we do (or don't), attitudes, fruit? Write down single word answers on a large sheet of paper.

Are all of equal importance can we let some of these slip? Why (or why not!)?

Privately on a piece of paper make a note of those areas from the list where you are less sharp than a year ago, those you are about the same and those you are sharper.

In pairs (with someone you trust and feel comfortable being accountable to) share one item from your list where you have either lost an edge or find it difficult to maintain. Try to identify how this may have happened – what things have put you off-course? Then in your pairs each of you say a prayer of confession in turn, identifying before God where things have dulled. Ask for forgiveness and repent by making a realistic commitment to get back on track and ask the Lord to deal with any obstacles in you or in the world. Agree to be accountable to each other or to a regular accountability partner.

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

Clare & Tony are looking to buy some gospel books to give out as gifts to everyone at the Christmas Carol and Nativity Service on Sunday 18th December. For visitors we hope they will use it to see what happened after Jesus birth, for regulars we hope you will find someone to pass the book onto with the same suggestion. Who might you pass yours on to? Would you like more copies or to give them out as a group?