

Word notes Sunday 11/10/09 – Tony Hodge
Be Prepared

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

Key Text: Isaiah 40:3-5 (Kings James or Modern King James) and Ephesians 6:13-18 (The Message)

These passages were shared at the end of Tony's preach on Sunday 27th September on faith (Seeing is believing), they are both about preparation of one sort or another. On the Isaiah passage Jim said he had been reading this and how it applied to ourselves individually, Cathy was then prompted to share the Ephesians passage in support.

In looking to see how these passages might apply to ourselves, Tony looked at the original context and sense of both, but mainly Isaiah, how the prophetic nature of the text meant it has application not just to those to whom it was said/written but into their future and beyond, even to us today.

Then main application of preparation was in our lives to make a straight way for the Lord.

For non-Christians this would be to clear the way through their thinking, attitudes and beliefs, to decide to put the Lord higher than the other exalted things in their lives and to be saved from the dark valleys before them through acceptance of Jesus.

For Christians we are challenged to examine ourselves and give over to the Lord any remnant of our unsaved life that He would have a clear path to fill us and work through us.

The Ephesians text goes on to show how we can then stand firm against the enemy using spiritual armour as our strength rather than rely on our former ways.

- Truth - instead of crookedness. Jesus is the Truth, there is no crookedness in Him.
- Righteousness – God's Kingdom established in you, not rough impassable places – protection for your heart.
- Peace - instead of worry and despair, the Gospel or Good News
- Faith - in God not earthly things (High things laid low) – Shield of faith – you're protected from head to toe and can deal a crushing blow with your faith.
- Salvation – the Lord has arrived, he took the highway you made for Him. Your Helmet (knowledge) – you know you are saved!

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

Read the Isaiah passage out loud. Looking at the following list, what things in our lives might be represented by the words in **bold**?

- Make straight a highway in **the desert** for our God
- Every **valley** shall be exalted
- Every **mountain and hill** shall be made low
- **Crooked places** shall be made level
- **Rough places** smooth

The word of the Lord is to prepare a highway. Who is to do the preparation - what part do we play ourselves, what is down to God and how do we go about this?

What is God's promise when the preparation is made? (v5)

For prayer: now is as good a time to act as any, commit to the Lord in prayer any actions each may wish to take. This may be confession and repentance or a re-commitment of some form as each hears the Lord..

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