



Word Notes: Sunday 14/10/18

Tim Anderson: Church in the 21st century

Key Text: Acts 16:1-15

Sometimes we need to be open to doing things differently. Paul had been used to arriving in town, going to the Synagogues to preach the good news there to see who would respond. Now it seems the Holy Spirit has other plans. Paul and his team are prevented from going to certain towns and areas and instead arrive in Philippi. Expecting to find people praying near the river they go outside the city to see and as they share people are saved and a new church community is birthed. Things changed too for Israel once they left the desert. They had been used to gathering manna for their food but now they had to settle and grow their own.

The church used to be in the valley of our culture – people were born into, educated by, married by and buried by The Church. On Sundays what you did was go to church. Culture was church directed. Through 20th Century, especially the 1960s and with the introduction of Sunday trading etc we've shifted from a culture of duty to one of consumerism. The Church is now in a different place in society. If we keep on thinking that a Sunday Church where everyone comes is the way to reach people we're deluding ourselves - people now gather around different things like sports, eating out and other leisure activities. Church has been relegated to one of a large number of leisure choices. To be a discipling community we need to work out where people are hanging out and be there. We still need the gathered church, our worship and celebration meetings are just as important in our relationship with God, but we need to be the sent church as well.

We as the church are being invited by the HS to be bold again. Church on Sunday isn't just an additional leisure activity in our lives it has a two-fold purpose: to celebrate God's love and give Him the worship that is His due and to reach out into our communities. But to be light-bearers into our communities, workplaces, schools etc we need a fervour for discipleship, one that puts aside my comfort in doing church as we've always done and steps out into new places and new ways to reach the unreached.

Small Group discussion

- 1) Why might Paul have needed to go outside the city at Philippi to find a place of prayer?
- 2) What is significant about Paul sharing with a group of women?
- 3) Both Peter (Acts 10) and Paul (Acts 13:44-47) had to change the accepted way of doing things in order for the message to reach the gentiles. Both faced opposition from those who wanted things kept the same.
 - a) What is your response to a call from God to go outside what is comfortable in order to reach the unreached?
 - b) How much change would you accept and are you willing to follow where the Holy Spirit will lead to see the Kingdom advanced?
- 4) Is "outreach" just for the few? What is the Holy Spirit saying to you in regard to being sent to disciple a person or group of people whether formally or informally?