

Word Notes Sunday 24/09/17
Tony Hodge: Church unpacked – Small Groups

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 16:5-28

Jesus is renowned for his Small Group – the Twelve Apostles/Disciples. They stand out from the hundreds who were disciples – his “church” who waited for the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem – and the thousands who flocked to see him but melted away at his arrest and crucifixion. On several occasions Jesus speaks with them alone to nurture them into the Apostles (messengers) they would become. They grow spiritually, in maturity and purpose. They are sent out on mission, given simple tasks and play their parts in Jesus ministry and it’s through sharing life, physical, emotional and spiritual, that they grow into the people God called them to be.

It’s no different after Jesus death and resurrection and the birth of the young church. They started with a response of thousands at Pentecost and numbers were added daily. They continued to meet “*day after day in the temple courts and from house to house*” (Acts 5:42) a model for church that we follow today. In Hebrews the writer exhorts them not to give up meeting together (Heb 10:25) to encourage each other in the faith.

And so today we too should not give up meeting together in the model given to us in scripture: in the temple courts and from house to house. Our aim: to meet in Jesus’ name with him at the centre, to encourage one another, to all share in Body ministry, to grow personally in our faith, to be communities of trust and honesty marked by sacrificial love and to take the message of the Gospel to those around us.

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

1, Join a Small Group. If you’re reading this you probably already have but that’s the primary application for this week. Are there others in the church who you could invite to join your group? How can you accommodate those who find attending difficult?

2, How can your group grow in the purposes of small groups: Connecting with each other, connecting with God, connecting with the World? Discuss this in relation to the aims in the last paragraph of the summary section.

3, How might the group multiply through nurturing a new small group – perhaps one that meets at different times, places or ways? Who might lead this group?

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

How effective is the group’s witness? Where and how is the group sowing in preparation for reaping?
How can this be made more effective?