

Home Group Notes w/c 3rd December 2017

Welcome

What events and activities are you looking forward to: 1. In the next month and, 2. In the next year?

Worship

Read together Revelation 22:1-7

What do you think are the most exciting parts of this prophesy?

Give thanks that, despite the news of wars, conflict, evil and corruption, God remains in control and has a plan for his people.

Pray that the second coming may be soon so as to banish all evil and suffering.

Word

Read Mark 13.

1. What are the two questions Jesus asks in verse 4?
2. Does Jesus answer these questions and why do you think he answers as he does?

Then read Mark 13: 1-2, 8, 14-22, 24-30

3. What is the verdict of Jesus on the religion of the temple?
You might wish to briefly look at chapters 11 and 12.
4. Why do you think the disciples might be incredulous at Jesus's prediction of the temple's future?
5. Taking these verses alone, how soon do you think the apocalypse would be?
6. What must believers do when they see the temple being desecrated?

NB. In AD66 Judea rebelled against the Roman and a terrible four year struggle followed (v.19 "the days of distress"). In AD70 Jerusalem was eventually captured by the Romans – 1.1 million people were killed and 100,000 were taken into slavery.

Then read Mark 13: 3-7, 9-13, 21-23, 32-37

7. What appears to be the timescale for these events? And is there any doubt that the events will happen?
8. What is Jesus's advice to believers and what does this mean for us in practical terms?
9. In what ways are you prepared / not prepared for Jesus's return?
10. Look back to our studies on the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5,6 and 7). What advice is there in the sermon about how we should "keep awake"?
11. In what ways do we experience the presence of Jesus today? What will be different after his second coming?

Witness

During Advent we look forward to Jesus first coming as that vulnerable infant. Verses 24-25 remind us of Jesus's death as a vulnerable man on the Cross. The whole passage points us to the time when Jesus will come again and that we must "keep awake".

12. Write a list of the activities and tasks we are planning to do in the lead-up to Christmas.
13. For each of these activities and tasks
 - a. Think about how the Sermon on the Mount can help us improve our attitude during Advent;
 - b. Think about how you could help the poor and vulnerable in our community (and wider community).

Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you to "keep awake" with the right attitude and works during this Advent and beyond.

Pray for the dying, the sick, the homeless, the lonely and those in any other kind of need.

Pray for those who do not believe in Jesus Christ (see v. 26).