

Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: Nov 5th 2017

Speaker: David Lawrence

Title: Telling God's Story

Introduction: These notes are not so much a Bible study as an opportunity to reflect on the main points from David's talk as a group.

Review: Invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review.

Read: Acts 26

Reflect:

Paul's life and testimony in this chapter point to seven key aspects of sharing our faith. Here are those seven points, with a question or two for sharing in the group for each one.

- 1. Paul led a provocative life (Acts 25:24).** Wherever he went his faith was noticed, in his case, usually provoking a riot!
 - How have people in the group found that their lives as Christians has provoked others to ask questions to, or otherwise react to, their Christian faith?
 - If our lives do not provoke reactions or questions do you think something is wrong?
- 2. Paul had a personal story to share (9-18).** His story had three basic elements: 'before' I met Jesus (9-12); an encounter with Jesus (13-15); and an account of how his life had changed since he met Jesus (16-18).
 - How would people tell their story of coming to faith using those three stages: before knowing Jesus; encounter with Jesus; the difference Jesus is making?
- 3. Paul could tell the Jesus story (e.g. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).**
 - How have people been able to talk about the life, death, resurrection and reality of knowing Jesus to their non-Christian friends?
 - If people have found it difficult, why is that so?
- 4. Paul could offer a defence of the Gospel (26:1).** Paul stayed in some places (eg Ephesus - see 19:8) for a long time arguing for the truth of the Gospel.
 - What are the main 'sticking points' for people believing in Jesus today? What questions or objections do they have?
 - How have people found they can answer those questions?

Leaders: feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes.

Don't feel you have to use all of the material, but do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect – Respond and **DO make room for the 'And Finally' questions!**

Thornbury Baptist Church:

Following the Way of Jesus: Loving God - Loving One Another - Loving Neighbour & World

5. **Paul had a sense of urgency about sharing the Gospel (29).** For Paul coming to faith wasn't an optional lifestyle choice: it was a life-or-death decision.

- Do people in the group feel a sense of urgency about letting people know about Jesus?
- If they do, how does that make them feel? If they don't, why not?

6. **Paul was willing to be ridiculed for his faith (24).** In fact he was willing to be beaten, imprisoned, assaulted and killed for it!

- What kinds of opposition have people experienced in sharing their faith?
- How can we continue to share our faith despite opposition?

7. **Paul saw the Gospel as a power to be unleashed (Romans 1:14-16).** He knew that even if his role was important, God used the shared story of Jesus to bring people to himself.

- Do you think we still believe that the Gospel has its own power, or do we tend to believe that we have to 'seal the deal' (convince people and bring them to faith) ourselves?
- Why might it be helpful to someone sharing their faith to believe that the Gospel has its own power to convince and convert?

Conclude:

How does each person desire to grow as a witness? Pray for one another.

And finally:

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?

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