

Blandford and Langton Home Groups

Meeting for Week Beginning 28 May 2008

Focus At Home “The Bible – The Big Picture”

“Healing and wholeness”

Isaiah 53.5 “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

Welcome

What part of your body would you change and why? Discuss your answers as a group.

Worship

Read Matthew 8 5-17, the story of Christ healing the Centurion’s servant.
Say / sing / or listen to a song of praise that reminds us it is God’s power by which we are changed and ultimately saved; (some suggestions if you are stuck)
SOF 21 – And can it be
SOF 470 –Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
SOF – 1193 Blessed be your name .

And share a time of prayer as the Holy Spirit prompts you through the words you used.

Word

Discuss amongst the group any people that you know who have been healed as the result of prayer. (Try not to direct the thoughts of the group yet because.....)

Once the group has discussed that ask what their understanding of ‘Healed’ was; spiritual, mental or physical? (That may have become obvious as discussions went on)

There were occasions when Jesus healed many e.g. Matthew 8 14-16 as we have already read, but there were times when he healed only one or no one at all e.g. John 5 3-9 or Luke 5 15-16.

Why did Jesus not heal everyone?

What does that say of the necessity for bodily sickness to be healed?

What was or were the focus of Jesus ministry – the things he did and said?

Where do we place physical healings in the great scheme of our lives? Necessary or not?

Sickness (of mind, body and soul) resulted from the Fall of creation and the eating of the apple in the Garden of Eden.

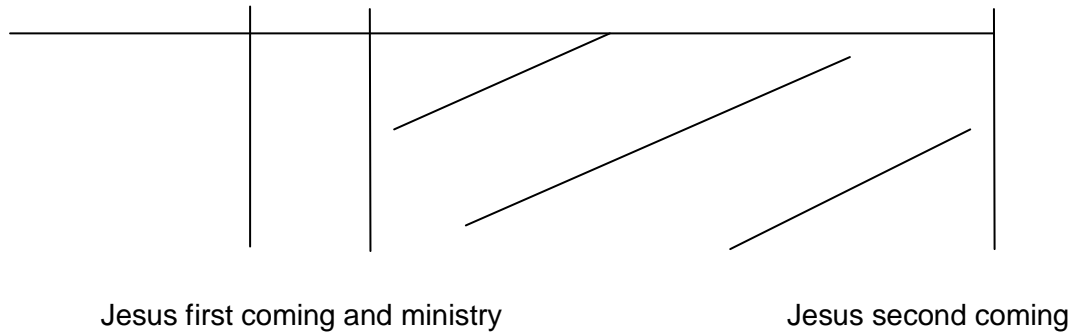
How does 1 Peter 2.24 speak into this? (See also Matt 8.17)

How does that help our understanding of the words, ‘So that we might die to sins and live for righteousness’?

What is the groups experience of Matt 8.13?
How does our wish for total healing for all align with our understanding of free will?
(i.e. Can God heal all of the Fall of creation now – sin as well as sickness etc -
without taking away our free will that leads to our ability to respond to him in love and
faith?)

An explanation of the lack of healing sometimes experienced is seen in the following
diagram (you may need to re-represent it for the group so they can see it)

This is the line of time;



The explanation is that Christ literally 'ushered in' the kingdom of God whilst he was on earth. He was the true power of God and showed the power that will come at his second coming (the parousia). We live in the shaded area – the referred to as the 'Now but not yet'. I.e. the time when the kingdom's power is amongst us as seen through the work of the Holy Spirit who came after Christ's ascension – but not fully here because God's full power will not be seen until the final Day of the Lord – Judgement day. That is when the final 'victory' will come yet there are still victories now through the power of the Holy Spirit.

What do the group think of this understanding?

Looking at the life of Jesus, his actions in particular, what should our response be to the Fall and sickness in the world and in humanity?

Read Revelation 21 1-5a

Works

Jesus commanded us to pray for each other (Luke 18.1) and that is for body, mind and soul.

As Christians we can lose opportunities to be emboldened in faith because we can pray into situations and then move on without looking for the work God has done in answer to the prayer. Such a structure can lead to us praying in 'Lists' rather than in faith and can actually lead to a reduction in our faith.

God is at work all the time – tangibly – and it is good for us to see that work result from something we have prayed for. It will also help us to be bolder in our prayers next time. So.....

Commit yourselves as a group to praying for people you know in the following categories for the next three months;
Someone who is;

Sick,
Alone,
Far from God,
Pressurised by life,
In need of support.

At the conclusion of three months (30th July for your diary so you don't forget) assess the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those whom you have prayed for, and praise God !!

Conclude by praying for one another – and thanking God for his goodness.
"To each one of us, grace has been given" (Ephesians 4:7)

Focus at Home next Week;

The Ascension.