

Small Group Notes 12th March 2017. Theme: 'Rooted in Grace, Growing in Good Works'

Key Words: Sin, Death Rooted, Poem, Handiwork, Masterpiece, Good Works, Saved, Faith

Welcome

- Read a poem by a South African or African poet (Possible ideas below – it would be worthwhile printing out the page for the group. Please feel free to choose your own poem if you so wish).
- CS Lewis wrote *"poetry ... is a little incarnation, giving body to what had been before invisible and inaudible"*¹. What did the poem(s) help you understand see or feel?

Worship

- Read Isaiah 60 (select a portion you like, try and include vs. 20-22).
- Or invite a photographer, poet or artist in your group to share one example of their work with you and describe how it expresses their faith (these notes are sent out early that you may have time to get this done).
- Pray Eph. 3:14-19 for one another.

Word

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

(Paul thinks in terms of the "present age", the age in rebellion to God, and the "age to come". In Christ the "age to come" has broken into the "present age")

- What is Paul's diagnosis of the world's problem? How do "death" and "sin" go together?
- What do you make of God's wrath in verse 3?²
- How have you grown up understanding what it means to be "saved"?
- How does this passage enhance your understanding of being saved?
- The word translated "workmanship" is *"poeima"* (as in poem) in the Greek. A word evocative of art, poetry and sculpture. This idea of God's people as God's artistic masterpiece is prominent in scripture (eg Gen 1:26-27, 31; Is. 29:23, 43:7, 60:21). Describe how you have seen the beauty of God's creative "workmanship" in DMC.
- What are good works? Would you agree that "good works", like poetry, open the eyes and the imagination to the beauty of God's Kingdom? How can DMC encourage artists, poets, story-tellers, photographers etc. to inspire us with their work (be sure to share your ideas with us).

.Works

- How can you express "good works" in your current job or home life?
- Pray for our Society Stewards and Small Groups. Pray for God to open the "eyes of our hearts" that we might see and participate in the good work God is doing around us.
- Ask the group for feed back on the Notes. Send responses to mcguigan@durbmeth.org.za or hand them to Sandra at the office or hand them in at the help desk.
- Perhaps some folk will be interested in the Justice Conference – see advert below:

¹ Reflections on the Psalms

² NT Wright: "Wrath is not capricious...not God losing his temper and lashing out. Wrath is the necessary action of the Holy God against everything that defaces and destroys and corrupts His wonderful creation, and particularly his human creation. If God does not hate genocide [and] the high-level corruption which keeps millions in poverty then God is not a "good God".

Poems

Ma (Antjie Krog)

Ma, ek skryf vir jou 'n gedig
sonder fensie leestekens
sonder woorde wat rym
sonder bywoorde
net sommer
'n kaalvoetgedig

want jy maak my groot
in jou krom klein handjies
jy beitel my met jou swart oë
en spits woorde
jy draai jou leiklipkop
jy lag en breek my tente op
maar jy offer my elke aand
vir jou Here God.
jou moesie-oor is my enigste telefoon
jou huis my enigste bybel
jou naam my breekwater teen die lewe

ek is so jammer mamma
dat ek nie is
wat ek graag vir jou wil wees nie.

You can find more Antje Krog poems here (<https://mg.co.za/article/1997-12-23-five-poems-by-antjie-krog>), Word of warning – clicking on the link in a rush and reading the first poem to your group would be memorable but unadvisable ☺ . I recommend the second one although it will have all the mothers in tears- just as the one above may have daughters in tears.

Telephone Conversation (Wole Soyinka 1963)

The price seemed reasonable, location
Indifferent. The landlady swore she lived
Off premises. Nothing remained
But self-confession. "Madam" , I warned,
"I hate a wasted journey - I am African."
Silence. Silenced transmission of pressurized
good-breeding. Voice, when it came,
Lipstick coated, long gold-rolled
Cigarette-holder pipped. Caught I was, foully.
"HOW DARK?"...I had not misheard...."ARE YOU
LIGHT OR VERY DARK?" Button B. Button A.
Stench
Of rancid breath of public hide-and-speak.
Red booth. Red pillar-box. Red double-tiered
Omnibus squelching tar.
It was real! Shamed
By ill-mannered silence, surrender
Pushed dumbfoundment to beg simplification.
Considerate she was, varying the emphasis-
"ARE YOU DARK? OR VERY LIGHT" Revelation
came
"You mean- like plain or milk chocolate?"
Her accent was clinical, crushing in its light
Impersonality. Rapidly, wave-length adjusted
I chose. "West African sepia"_ and as
afterthought.
"Down in my passport." Silence for spectroscopic
Flight of fancy, till truthfulness changed her
accent
Hard on the mouthpiece "WHAT'S THAT?"
conceding "DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS." "Like
brunette."
"THAT'S DARK, ISN'T IT?"
"Not altogether.
Facially, I am brunette, but madam you should
see the rest of me. Palm of my hand, soles of my
feet.
Are a peroxide blonde. Friction, caused-
Foolishly madam- by sitting down, has turned
My bottom raven black- One moment madam! -
sensing
Her receiver rearing on the thunderclap
About my ears- "Madam," I pleaded, "wouldn't
you rather
See for yourself?"



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If you do not have access to the internet please contact the Church Office to register.