

Small Group Notes 25 June 2017. Theme: “Courage”

Key Words: Courage, Fear, Persecution, Loyalty, Faithfulness.

Welcome

- Describe an experience of feeling rejected or opposed because of your faith.

Worship

- Read Psalm 86:1-10. Invite group members to thank God for answered prayer. Praise God for all God’s “marvellous works”.

Word

Read Mt. 10:24-39

1. What troubles you about this passage?
2. What are you most afraid of?
3. Verse 28 is taken by some to mean we should fear God as the ultimate judge. Another scholar says: “*I persist in taking to refer to Satan, not God (God can be trusted with the hairs of your head; he’s not out to get you)*”¹. How do you read it? Either way we are meant to fear losing the soul above all else. Do you?
4. It seems strange that the “*Prince of peace*” declares: “*I have not come to bring peace*”! But Jesus is following prophetic tradition. Read Jeremiah 8:11. Commenting on Jeremiah Eugene Peterson writes: “*The task of a prophet is not to smooth things over but to make things right. The function of religion is not to make people feel good but to make them good. Love? Yes, God loves us. But his love is passionate and seeks faithful, committed love in return*”. Does this help you understand Jesus words? What sort of peace does Jesus bring?
5. Where do your primary allegiances lie? Verses 38-39 teach that as long as we think there is something more valuable than living in fellowship with Jesus we cannot learn from him. Have you come to that place of clarity where nothing is more important than faithfully following Jesus?

Works

- Share how you experienced God’s presence in worship on Sunday?
- Pray for Bishop Ziphozihle Siwa for his role as presiding Bishop of the MCSA and president of the SACC. Pray especially for the role he plays in challenging those who abuse power.
- Pray for Vuyelwa, her husband Thandi and her daughter Lethu. Thandi starts Dialysis this week.
- If applicable -ask the group to pray for you and to hold you accountable to where you must stand for truth at home, work or in the community.
- Send a representative from your group to the Tuesday prayer meeting (05:45) in the downstairs lounge.
- Encourage **all members to attend services on Sunday 25th June** – a special notice and call to prayer will be read.

1. Wright, N. T. (2001). Twelve Months of Sundays: Reflections on Bible Readings, Year A (pp. 80–81). London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.