

## ST. BARNABAS CHURCH, SWANLAND

*'Sharing Christ through friendship'*

### SMALL GROUPS NOTES

Epiphany 3 – w/beg 24 January 2010.

Bible passages: 1 Peter 2:7-12; Matt. 3:1-6, 13-17

#### Becoming Like Jesus (3): Joining with the chosen race

<b>Welcome/ icebreaker</b>	When was your ('water') baptism (or 'christening')? When did it first mean something to you personally? ( <i>If you've not been baptised, explain why if you wish</i> ).
<b>Worship</b>	Have one or two people slowly read out the following passages ( <i>the verses are printed overleaf if that helps</i> ) whilst everyone else reads 1 Peter 2:1-10 silently: Ps. 34:8; Ex.19:4-6; Is. 61:6; Is. 28:16; Ps. 118:22; Is. 8:14; Is. 43:20; Ex.19:6 ( <i>again</i> ); Is. 62:12; Is. 43:21; Hos. 2:23. Use this experience of God fulfilling his promises to inform a time of open praise (spoken or sung). <i>Suggested songs: Songs of Fellowship nos. 1136 You have called us chosen; 1391 Jesus loves the church (pto for words); 873 Jesus, lover of my soul; 369 Lord, you are so precious to me; 522 Thank you for the cross; 865 Jesus Christ I think upon your sacrifice.</i> End by reading Rev. 5:9-10 and 20:6; and (together if possible) Rev. 1:5b-6.
<b>Word (refs.↓)</b>	
1 Peter 2: 7-8	<i>If you looked at this passage last week, share any insights from Sunday morning that have struck you since. If not, look at last week's question(s) on verses 6-8 (and/or verses 4-5).</i>
1 Peter 2:9-10:	Reflect on the meaning of the phrase 'royal priesthood'. What's the best title for people who lead a church: ministers/priests/vicars/pastors/clergy/leaders/ etc?
1 Peter 2:9, 11 and 12	What is meant to be the result of knowing ourselves loved and chosen and valued by God? – in terms of what we say (end of v.9) and do (v.11-12)? Discuss!
Matt. 3:1-6, 11, 13-15	In his baptism Jesus identified himself with the renewal movement of God's people that was focussed first on John the Baptist (vv.13-15). Last week we looked at the importance of the church <u>building</u> . How important is it to you to belong to a specific church family/ <u>fellowship</u> ? In what way(s) do you feel 'connected' to it? Is the St. Barnabas' family "scratching where you're itching"?
Matt. 3: 16-17	Jesus heard God's voice reminding him, 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased' (v.17, see Luke 3:22). Do you feel it is important to <u>know</u> that you are a son/ daughter of God? To be <u>told</u> that you are loved? In what ways have you experienced/ do you experience these truths for yourself?
<b>Witness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Did anyone have a good conversation with someone who doesn't go to church about how they see their church/ St Barnabas? Share stories of how easy/ hard this was to do (or to 'not do'), and any insights from the experience.</li><li>➤ This week, try and speak to someone whom you do love but whom you don't normally tell them that, in so many words. Find a way to tell them that you do love them, and that God loves them just as much. Pray for God's help for this!</li></ul>

NB Leaders please remind everyone about the Fellowship Together at St. Barnabas on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 7.30pm (for refreshments) for 7.45pm – 9.15pm. **All welcome**

Ps. 34:8

<sup>8</sup>Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed are those who take refuge in him.

Ex.19:4-6

“ You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”

Is. 61:6

“And you will be called priests of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God”.

Is. 28:16

See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.

Ps. 118:22

The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone.

Is. 8:14

A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall. They stumble because they disobey the message— which is also what they were destined for.

Is. 43:20

“I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise”.

Ex.19:6

“you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation”.

Is. 62:12

And they will call them, "The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD";

Is. 43:21

“the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise”.

Hos. 2:23

“I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy;

Then I will say to those who were not My people, ‘ You are My people!’  
And they shall say, ‘You are my God!’ ”

Rev 5:9-10

And they sang a new song, saying:  
"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God members of every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Rev. 20:6

Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Rev. 1:5b-6

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father - to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

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JESUS LOVES THE CHURCH,

He gave Himself for His bride.  
He knows what we will be,  
A conquering army,  
An unblemished people.  
We're accepted, we're forgiven,  
We're united with Him;  
Not rejected, not forgotten,  
Not abandoned in sin.

Can you hear Him singing,  
‘I love you, I love you’?  
Can you hear Him calling,  
‘I want you, I have chosen you to be Mine’?

Jesus loves the church,  
His passion through the ages.  
Hell will not prevail.  
He builds us together,  
A living temple.  
We're accepted, we're forgiven,  
We're united with Him;  
Not rejected, not forgotten,  
Not abandoned in sin.