

ST. BARNABAS CHURCH, SWANLAND

***'Sharing Christ through friendship'* – NOTES for SMALL GROUPS**

Wk/beg 18 March 2018. **Bible passages: John 12:20-33 & Hebrews 5:5-10**

Welcome/ icebreaker	What do you think of the plan for Donald Trump to meet Kim Jong-Un? Do peace talks really work? (can you think of any in the past that have achieved lasting peace?)
Worship	Suggestions: 780 How deep the Father's love; 865 Jesus Christ I think upon your sacrifice; 1015 Thank you for saving me; 1661 You chose the cross.
Word (refs. ↓)	
Hebrews 5:5-10	Which episode from Jesus' life is v.7 normally taken as referring to? Could it also relate to this week's gospel? (cf. e.g. v.7 with John 12:27-8). <i>NB No 'Gethsemane' in John's gospel.</i> What do you think v.8 means – was Jesus not obedient when he was younger? Or does it mean that he learnt what obedience entails (i.e. how hard it is)?
John 12:20-33	<p>Angus Ritchie writes that this passage shows the cross is about 'revealing, reconciling and restoring' (the "3 Rs" of the meaning of the cross)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesus speaks about the seed dying (v.24) and about his being 'lifted up from the earth' (v.32) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. is he talking primarily about his death (being 'lifted up' on the cross), his resurrection (his 'exaltation'), or both, or something else? (see v.33) b. This 'lifting up' draws all people to Jesus – so revealing God to them. In what ways can we as Jesus' followers reveal God to the world? How can our own 'dying to self' achieve this? 2. Jesus talks about the dying seed producing 'many seeds' (v.24) – implying a spiritual harvest from his death. He goes on to speak about his followers not loving their life but keeping it by losing it, and serving him (v.25-6). In this way both Jesus himself and his followers are involved in God's act of reconciling people to himself. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In what way does Jesus death enable people to be reconciled to God? b. In what way does serving Jesus (v.26) enable people to be reconciled to one another? c. Note it is 'Greeks' (i.e. non-Jews) to whom he is speaking (see v.20-1) – how does this passage show that Jesus' death breaks down the age-old barriers between Jews and non-Jews? (note: this passage is set <u>after</u> Palm Sunday and the cleansing of the Temple, which Jesus declared should be 'a house of prayer for all peoples'). 3. In v.31 Jesus says, 'now the prince of this world will be driven out'. Here we see the beginning of creation being restored to its original, perfect state. How can we be part of 'the restoration of all things' even before Jesus' kingdom finally fully comes? Are there aspects of life today where we could be working to see Christian values replace the values of this world?
Witness	<p>Pray for your mission link person / project</p> <p>How might you reveal (by your life and/or your words) the meaning of Easter to those you meet this week?</p> <p>Finalise plans for your Easter social event for friends, neighbours & wider family who are not yet Christians.</p> <p>Remind anyone who is not on the church electoral roll that they have until March 30th (Good Friday) to sign up. Discuss and pray about the vacancies for churchwardens and PCC members at the upcoming APCM (15th April).</p>