



WALKING

with JESUS

The Road of Discipleship

A Long Obedience in the Same Direction



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Bible Study 'THOUGHTS'

WALKING WITH JESUS

THE ROAD OF DISCIPLESHIP

'A Long Obedience in the Same Direction'* is the title of a set of devotions on some of the Psalms by Eugene Peterson and it seems to me this is an apt description of the Christian Life.

In Acts 9:2 the Christians are described as 'belonging to the way' and in many places in the New Testament where it talks about the Christian life the word is actually the Greek word for walk. So being Jesus' disciple can be described as being on the road, a thought also taken up by John Bunyan in 'A Pilgrims Progress'.

So, in this set of studies we turn to the basics of being Jesus' disciple, of walking with him on the road to learn and grow into the people that God wants us to be.

We should be all praying for each other that through the influence of God's word and his Holy Spirit we will become more like Jesus.

Greg Holmes - July 2021

*The line is originally attributed to the atheistic philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche

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References

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DISCIPLE

1. The Greek word. The Greek word *mathetes* (“disciple”) is from the verb *manthano* (“to learn”). Thus, a disciple is a pupil or learner. In Greek culture prior to Socrates, *manthano* described the process by which a person sought theoretical knowledge. A *mathetes* was one who attached himself to another to gain some practical or theoretical knowledge, whether by instruction or by experience.

But the concept of discipleship was most popular in the Judaism of Jesus’ day. Rabbis had disciples who studied with them in a well-defined and special relationship. The need for training was intensely felt in the Jewish community, which believed that no one could understand Scripture without a teacher’s guidance. A disciple in Judaism had to master—in addition to the Scriptures of the OT—the oral and written traditions that had grown up around the Scriptures. Only after being so taught might a person become a rabbi himself or teach with any authority. This notion is expressed in the Jews’ amazed reaction to Jesus’ public teaching: “How did this man get such learning without having studied?” (Jn 7:15). Jesus taught with authority without having gone through the only process that the Jews felt could qualify anyone to teach.

Several aspects of the rabbi-disciple relationship in first-century Judaism are significant. The disciple left his home and moved in with his teacher. He served the teacher in the most servile ways, treating him as an absolute authority. The disciple was expected not only to learn all that his rabbi knew but also to become like him in character and piety (Mt 10:24; Lk 6:40). The rabbi in return provided food and lodging and saw his own distinctive interpretations transmitted through his disciples to future generations. So when Mark says that Jesus chose twelve men “that they might be with him” (Mk 3:14), he accurately reflects contemporary understanding of how future leaders should be trained.

2. The Twelve and others. The word *mathetes* is used in several different ways in the Gospels. First, it designates the Twelve whom Jesus chose to be with him. The Twelve are unique in that Jesus chose them and trained them to both teach and serve (Mk 3:14). In responding to Jesus’ call, the Twelve made a disciple’s total commitment. They surrendered everything to live in obedience to Jesus (Lk 14:26).

Second, *mathetes* identifies followers of various schools or traditions. There were the disciples of the Pharisees (Mt 22:16; Mk 2:18; Lk 5:33) and the disciples of John the Baptist (Mt 11:2ff.; Mk 2:18; Lk 5:33; Jn 1:35-37; 3:35). Used in this sense, “disciple” does not identify a student in a traditional teacher-learner relationship; rather, it identifies persons who are adherents of a movement.

Third, our NT describes a much wider circle beyond the Twelve who are also called disciples. These are adherents of the movement associated with

Jesus. At times the word “disciple” may seem to carry the sense of “believer” (cf. Jn 8:31; 13:35; 15:8). But it would be a mistake to think that all those who were called disciples in the Gospels were persons who had made a firm commitment to Jesus. In fact many were only initially attracted to Jesus. When they found his teachings difficult, as after his discourse on the Bread of Life, “many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him” (Jn 6:66).

After the Resurrection, Jesus charged his followers to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Mt 28:19). The mission was not to win loose adherents for a movement. Instead, Jesus said to his disciples that they were to teach those who believe “to obey everything” he had commanded them (v. 20).

3. Discipleship today. Acts continues to use the word “disciple,” but there *mathetes* is synonymous with “believer.” Luke even records the point at which the believing community began its break with the language of both Jewish and Greek culture. He tells of the time at Antioch when “the disciples were first called Christians” (Ac 11:26). Although it is dangerous to build on silence, it does seem significant that the term “disciple” is simply not used in the Epistles. This may be because it carried too many associations at a time when a new process was demanded within the church to equip God’s people for growth and ministry.





Jesus defined the goal of discipling when he said, “A student [*mathetes*] is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher” (Lk 6:40). Likeness, not simply knowledge, was the goal of Jewish discipleship. And likeness to Jesus himself is the goal God has for you and me (Ro 8:29; 1 Jn 3:2). Although complete likeness to Jesus awaits our resurrection, even now God is actively at work within believers. We “are being transformed into his [Jesus’] likeness with ever-increasing glory” (2 Co 3:18). A number of NT passages give insight into the processes that are involved in individual and community growth toward Christlikeness (e.g., Eph 4:11-16).

The NT has several images that replace the image of disciples gathered around a rabbi. The Epistles speak of the Christian community as family, teaching us that we must build intimate relationships with our brothers and sisters. There is the image of Christ’s body, a living organism, and this teaches us to look to each other for ministries that will facilitate our transformation. There is the image of a holy temple, indicating that we are to serve God and others. The Epistles, especially in contexts that emphasize the family and the body, present new interpersonal processes that in effect supplant those by which the disciples of Judaism were trained.

From: Lawrence Richards. *Encyclopedia of Bible Words*. (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1991) Edited.

Each of the studies looks like this. The 00 study below is just to give you some idea of what to do with each section.

These can be done individually or in 'small groups'. In many ways a small group is the best way that we can all encourage and build up one-another.

Study 00	Study Title			
<i>This section simply seeks to give some introductory thought starters on the topic of discipleship and the sub-topics we have chosen.</i>				
		Passage 1	Passage 2	Passage 3 ->
<i>These 4 or 5 or more passages are for your consideration as you think through the topic.</i>				
What shines from the Passage? 	<i>For each of the passages list here what 'jumps out' at you. What comforts you. What shocks you?</i>	In these columns below I have attempted to provide some thoughts on each of the passages and below some on the 'extra' passages. These are in NO way intended to be <u>the</u> answers to the questions on the right. They are more in the form of Discussion starters or my musings.		
What questions does the passage raise? 	<i>What puzzles you about the passage? Write or discuss questions you would like to share or research?</i>			
What personal response can you see? 	<i>What should you <u>do</u> about what the passage has to say to you? How and when should you do it?</i>			
What are you prompted to pray about? 	<i>Prayer points.</i>			

Other Passages to Consider: *Here are some passages you might like to look up and further consider on this week's topic.*





Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider

These are some questions to prompt further discussion of the topic giving consideration to what the passages studied have said.

1. .
2. ?
3. ?

These Thoughts are meant to be the start of the assistance I am willing to give in regard to the studies. If you need anything further DO NOT hesitate to contact me.

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Study 1	Joining the Road		
<i>Discipleship is being a follower of Jesus the Messiah as LORD of all. It begins by acknowledging His claim on your life and the price he has paid, by dying on a Roman cross, to reconcile you to God. In this your sins are forgiven and you are, through God's power and the work of the Holy Spirit now walking in obedience to Him.</i>			
	Romans 3:9-26	Ephesians 2:1-10	John 14:23-24 James 2:14-17 Galatians 5:19-26 Jeremiah 31:31-34
What shines from the Passage? 	The pivot of this passage is in verse 21. 'But now ...' Having proved in Rom 1:2-3:20 that all lie under God's judgement Paul now tells what God has done to address the dire situation. Which the OT bears witness to.	Ephesians 2 makes the same point as Romans 3 but emphasises in v9-10 that we are saved by God's grace, not by any merit or works of our own.	<u>John 14</u> : To love Jesus, to be his disciple, we must 'obey' his teaching.
What questions does the passage raise? 	Righteousness is given through Faith in Jesus Christ and his death on the cross.	Further this salvation has ongoing consequences in our behaviour – v10.	<u>James 2</u> : Faith is demonstrated and shown to be alive by works .
What personal response can you see? 			<u>Galatians 5</u> : Contrasts the life of the flesh with the life of faith. The disciple of Jesus will demonstrate the gifts of the spirit
What are you prompted to pray about? 			<u>Jeremiah 31</u> : Reminds us that this salvation, this heart renovation, has been God's plan all along.

Other Passages to Consider: Luke 15:11-23; Psalm 1

Luke 15: Here, in story form, is the wonderful picture of God's offer of salvation to rebellious mankind. All of course facilitated by the work of Jesus on the cross.

Psalm 1: Here the nature of the Christian life and its rewards are poetically described. Not the warning in v1 against being drawn back into sinful way by stealthy, progressive temptation and the antidote in v2 – 'the law of the LORD.'

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. Write down or share how you became a Christian.

Our personal stories are great evidence of how God's gracious salvation works. One of the great things about them is that they are not the same. God works in people's lives in a great variety of ways.

2. If we are saved by grace alone what place does obedience have in the Christian's life?

The two besetting 'heresies' of Christianity relate to this question. The first is that by doing good works, being a good person, and keeping God's laws you will be saved. The second is that God has acted to save us so we are saved and we can do what we like, God has to save us.





Both of course are wrong and the truth lies somewhere in the middle. Fairly simplistically we are saved by faith and we live as Jesus commands out of love for and thankfulness to Jesus.

3. What is a basic outline of the Gospel? How would you explain it to a friend?

There are a number of published ones of these as well as personal ways of going about it. Sharing how we would do it is encouraging and helpful.

4. What are the great challenges for you in the Christian walk?

For discussion.

Study 2	Looking to our Master and Guide		
<i>The Disciple is a follower and learner. He looks to the Master, Jesus, for instruction in the truth and guidance in the walk of life. Jesus is exemplar, teacher, leader, and LORD. Jesus lived on earth in order to fulfil these roles as a full human being. Jesus is fully God and fully man.</i>			
	Hebrews 12:1-3	Psalm 23	Matthew 4:17-22 Colossians 1:28-29
What shines from the Passage? 	The picture is of an endurance race with the 'witnesses' of ch 11 as spectators. We run the race with our eyes fixed on Jesus who has perfectly run the race before us.	This most familiar of all the Psalms is a picture of God and the shepherd. Jesus is described as the 'good shepherd' in John 10 and so we can see that this psalm can be taken to refer to Jesus	<u>Matthew 4:</u> These verses record the calling of some of the disciples. The significant thing for us are the twin ideas of 'leave' and 'follow.'
What questions does the passage raise? 	Jesus is the one who leads, guides, encourages and sets the example for what we are doing	The Jesus we look to is the Jesus who cares for an protects us and lavishes good things upon us.	<u>Colossians 1:</u> 'Everyone fully mature <u>in Christ</u> '
What personal response can you see? 	Peterson (NBC) <i>"As the one who has realized faith to the full from start to finish, he has fulfilled God's promises for all who believe, giving faith a perfect basis by his high-priestly work."</i>		This of course is our personal aim but like Paul we should be interacting with one another to 'present' those around us 'fully mature' as well.
What are you prompted to pray about? 			

Other Passages to Consider: John 1:1-14; 10:14-17; Matthew 7:28-29; Hebrews 1:3

John 1: This exalted picture of Jesus (as God come down among us) reminds us again of the one to whom we are 'discipled'





John 10: Jesus is the shepherd who gathers his people.

Matthew 7: This records the crowd's reaction to the Sermon on the Mount. The one we follow is the one who speaks with authority and is amazing.

Hebrews 1: This Jesus we follow is God who now sits at God's right hand.

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. **What is your favourite story about what Jesus does during his time on earth? Why is it your favourite?**
For discussion.
2. **"Fixing your eyes on Jesus" is a fine idea, but how do you do it?**
Again for discussion.
One of the ways we 'see' Jesus is 'clothed in his word' – The Gospels and the rest of the Scriptures show us Jesus.
3. **Shepherd, servant, master, king, teacher are all 'titles' for Jesus. How do they help us 'look to him?'**
More discussion.
It is worth noting that these titles or roles of Jesus can have more or less relevance to us in different situations and at different stages in our life of discipleship.
4. **Share your struggles in regard to being like Jesus.**
Again for discussion.

Study 3	Using the Road Book		
<i>The guidebook and map for the walk of the disciple is the Bible. This is God's revelation of Himself to humankind and the authority for the follower of Jesus. Both the Old and New Testaments reveal, progressively, to us the nature of God's salvation for mankind and the person of the saviour, Jesus. Reading the Bible provides direction for our walk.</i>			
	Psalm 19	2 Timothy 3:14-17	Hebrews 4:12 2 Peter 1:20-21 Deuteronomy 32:45-47
What shines from the Passage? 	This psalm speaks of God's revelation of himself. Note the three sections 1-6 God revealed in the creation.	This classic passage on the inspiration of scripture. Worth noting is what the Scripture is good (useful) for and what that needs to produce.	<u>Hebrews 4</u> : Peterson (NBC) <i>"God's word penetrates to the deepest recesses of our being... Indeed, confronted by the word of God, we are confronted by God himself, and nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight."</i>
What questions does the passage raise? 	7-10 God revealed in his word. 11-14 Its impact on the servant/sinner.		<u>2 Peter 1</u> : Wheaton (NBC) <i>"These two verses are of great importance for our understanding of how Scripture came to us. While God used men, with all their different backgrounds, interests and temperaments to convey his word, at the same time he guided them in speaking and writing it to us"</i>
What personal response can you see? 	Worth considering the reliability of the forms of revelation and what impact they have on us.		
What are you prompted to pray about? 			<u>Deuteronomy 32</u> : God's words are the words of life.





Other Passages to Consider: Luke 24:27-32; 1 Corinthians 10:11

Luke 24: The classic story reminds us that Jesus saw the Old Testament as speaking of himself.

1 Corinthians 10: Scripture is written for our benefit – to warn us of things to come.

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. **What is the main theme of the Bible?**
For discussion but ultimately it is Jesus
2. **What is your favourite book of the Bible? Why?**
For discussion or perhaps debate!
3. **Do you enjoy, really enjoy, reading the Bible? Why or why not?**
Part of this question is to ask, "Do we let the Bible speak to us on more than an intellectual and factual level?" Do we let it speak to our emotions and our motivation?
4. **Share your struggles and triumphs in regard to reading the Bible regularly.**
Don't be defensive – I think all of us struggle with this one.

Study 4	Conversing with the Master		
<p><i>As we walk on the road, we have the incredible privilege of a personal relationship with God our Maker and Jesus his Son. One of the ways we express this is through the medium of prayer – our communication with God. Through Prayer we bring our Praise, Thanksgiving, Adoration, Intercessions, Concerns and Requests to our Father. He hears and responds in grace and love to his adopted sons and daughters.</i></p>			
	Matthew 6:9-13	Psalm 4	Matthew 6:5-8 Romans 8:26-28 1 John 5:14-15
<p>What shines from the Passage?</p> 	<p>There is not much more to be said than the introductory words This, then, is how you should pray.</p>	<p>We could have chosen any of a number of Psalms as examples of the prayer of the Old Testament.</p>	<p><u>Matthew 6:</u> Further words on how we go about praying. It is not for an audience It is communication with our Father.</p>
<p>What questions does the passage raise?</p> 	<p>The prayer is full of hope in and reliance on the 'Father' to whom we pray.</p>	<p>Derek Kidner (TOTC) has these headings for the Psalm "Peace! Be still!"</p>	<p><u>Romans 8:</u> When I find a situation in which I am not sure how to pray</p>
<p>What personal response can you see?</p> 		<p>4:1. Well-founded prayer 4:2, 3. An answer to the fickle 4:4, 5. An answer to the hot-heads 4:6, 7. An answer to the doleful 4:8. Well-founded peace</p>	<p>Bruce (TNTC) "it covers those longings and aspirations which well up from the depths of the spirit and cannot be imprisoned within the confines of everyday words."</p>
<p>What are you prompted to pray about?</p> 			<p><u>1 John 5:</u> We are to ask according to his will. Which implies that we will seek to know the will of God through His Word.</p>

Other Passages to Consider: Genesis 18:16-33; Matthew 7:7-11; John 16:23-24

Genesis 18: This is Abraham's prayer/negotiation with God which we looked at in our last series. Not that Abraham has an existing relationship with God, knows what God is like, makes his bold request(s) and then leaves the resolution of the issue up to God.

Matthew 7: Further encouragement to bring our concerns to our loving Father.

John 16: France (TNTC) "7-8. The three balancing clauses in each of these verses add up to a strong exhortation to persistent prayer. 9-10. The reason for this confidence is explained by a consideration of fatherhood."

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. When are you most prompted to pray?

For discussion – I suspect most of us are prompted by circumstances and often by challenging circumstances. The scriptures urge us to pray also at other times. In the good times and the bad.





2. Do you ever use the Lord's Prayer in your private prayer times?

During my time at Moore College when we said the Lord's Prayer every morning at Chapel it struck me on more than one occasion that the prayer more often than not addressed the various situations in which we found ourselves. I still occasionally use it when I don't know what words to use.

3. 'Pray constantly' (2 Timothy 1:3). How do you do that?

This is Paul's constant attitude. It exhorts us to pray often (not restricted by special times or special meetings) but also to have a constantly prayerful attitude that is at all times attuned to God's presence.

4. Share your struggles and triumphs in regard to praying regularly and consistently.

Study 5	Fellowship on the Road		
This is the first of 5 studies on how we should relate as Christians. See notes on next page.			
<i>Salvation through Jesus brings us into an individual, reconciled, relationship to Jesus AND into a community of those who have been likewise saved. This call to community brings with it relationships with and responsibilities to other believers. We are bound to one another through Jesus. One way of describing this is Service, Other Person-Centredness, Humility and Love. (SOHL) These interrelate with one another as they complement and enhance each one of the others and love enfolds and constrains them all. The following studies look at each of these in turn.</i>			
	Ephesians 2:19-22	Hebrews 10:19-25	John 15:1-8 Psalm 133
What shines from the Passage? 	It is useful to note the images that Paul uses here to describe the church. Those of citizenship, household, temple and building. The language throughout is of coming together.	Notice how this passage first emphasises our individual relationship with God through Jesus. Then it speaks of us doing this together, of meeting to encourage one another. With the goal of 'love and good deeds'. Guthrie (TNTC) <i>"It is expressed in three stages: let us draw near (verse 22), let us hold fast (verse 23) and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works (verse 24). The first refers to personal devotion, the second to consistency and the third to social obligations."</i>	<u>John 15</u> : Jesus here reminds us that we are branches 'grafted into' Him. We belong together because we belong to Him. <u>Psalm 133</u> : Speaks of the Blessing and Joy of God's people dwelling in unity and peace. The language used is extravagant and highly visual and luxurious.
What questions does the passage raise? 			
What personal response can you see? 			
What are you prompted to pray about? 			

Other Passages to Consider: Matthew 18:19-20; Revelation 7:9-10.

Matthew 18: These verses occur at the end of a discussion of how to deal with a brother sinning against another. Nevertheless (France (TNTC)) *"The Jesus who could speak the words of 28:20, and of whom the name Emmanuel could be used (1:23), here assures his disciples that that great universal truth applies also at the personal level. And that gives a whole new dimension to an apparently insignificant gathering of two or three concerned disciples."*

Revelation 7: Here is the heavenly picture of the saints (all those who belong to Jesus) gathered before the throne and before Jesus, the Lamb. People of every culture, language, group and ethnicity.

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. It is possible to be a Christian and not belong to / go to a church?

It is possible (there are some in our world for whom gathering is impossibly dangerous) but it is not what God intends for his people. Christians are designed for mutual encouragement

2. What does it mean for us to 'encourage' one another?

The word means to stand alongside and support the other. We have a responsibility to the other Christians around us to build them up, to correct and to direct them in the ways of love and good works.

3. What does Matthew 18:20 mean? How does that make you feel?

For discussion but see the comment above.

4. Share, or write down, the best experience(s) of true Christian Fellowship you have had.

For discussion or reflection.

Fellowship on the Road*

One of the vital steps on the road of Discipleship is the way we relate to one another in the Church. This is process of working as Christians is to apply the Bible to the way we relate to one another, to take seriously the scriptural principles for relationship and then to wisely, and radically apply them to living. Our Churches would be transformed if only we discovered and then put into practice these Biblical principles.

The way I have characterised Christian Relationships in these studies is to look at them as defined by the acronym S. O. H. L. The letters of which stand for Service, Other-Person Centredness, Humility and Love. So we have:

S O H L: A VIEW OF CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS *

Before we look at the elements individually, we need first to set them in a context. There is no better passage with which to do this than Philippians Chapter 2.

Philippians 2:1-11 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross!
Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.





The fact that the God we put our faith in is exists as a Trinity (Three Persons – One God) Means that God himself is a relational being. God, the Father, God, the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit relate to one another in ways we cannot possibly understand.

It is this relational God who initiates our relationship with Him and with one another and who is always our example of them. Verses 1-4 set out the quality of relationships which the Philippians should be striving for and then refers to the example of Our Lord.

The crux of the matter is that Jesus, who is God, was prepared to enter into this world, to be born a man (a creature), to grow up, to walk the roads and alleys of Palestine (to get his divine feet dirty), to be rejected, roughed up, laughed at, scorned, persecuted, beaten, scourged, tortured and in the end die the excruciating death of crucifixion, not for his own welfare, but for the welfare of the human race. This is RELATIONSHIP. There will be other points to make and other principles to be considered but here always must be our basis: That Jesus Died For US.

**These notes originated in a paper I prepared in the mid 1990s*

As part of a Professional Development program for Teachers in Christian Schools. GwH

Study 6	Fellowship on the Road: Service		
<i>Serving one another is exemplified by Jesus as he washes the Disciples muddy feet. He takes the role of a lowly servant. Service is giving on oneself to someone else. Not because they deserve it but because you can. We all have gifts from God which are to be used in serving one another and the world around us.</i>			
	John 13:1-17	Isaiah 53:1-12	1 Peter 4:7-11 Romans 12:4-8 1Corinthians 12:7
What shines from the Passage? 	As you read this familiar passage try to take in anew the shock the apostles/disciples must have felt. Foot washing was a task for the lowly servants not for the host at the feast. This is the example of gracious service. It is an example for us.	This is the best known of the so-called 'servant' passages in Isaiah. It of course points to Jesus who took his task of service far beyond mere foot washing and suffered the horrors of a trial, torture and the cross, in order to serve those who enter into the salvation and forgiveness of sins he offers.	<u>1 Peter 4</u> : Peter here reminds us of the fact that we have been given gifts by God to use for others <u>Romans 12</u> : Here again we are reminded that we all have gifts that we are to use for the building up of the church (the body). We are to do this to the best of our abilities for the service of others. <u>1Corinthians 12</u> : What we have from the Spirit is not just to puff ourselves up, give us status, or make us look good – it is for the <u>common</u> good.
What questions does the passage raise? 			
What personal response can you see? 			
What are you prompted to pray about? 			

Other Passages to Consider: Mark 10 42-45; Ephesian 4:11-12

Mark 10: Jesus expounds to the disciples the nature of true greatness. Again, referencing the cross. Note Mark 9:35

Ephesian 4: Further gifts are listed to be used to help others serve so that the church is built up.

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. How is Jesus a servant?

For discussion.

Note again Jesus words in Mark 10:42-45 and his actions in John 13.

Remember this is the Lord of Heaven and Earth. Yet his leadership is servant-leadership.

2. Which sort of 'greatness' should we pursue as Christians?

For discussion.

The true greatness is using our God given gifts for the service of others to the best of our ability.

3. Discuss or consider the gifts God has given you. How are you using them for the benefits and encouragement of your church family?

For discussion.

4. Share your thoughts on how your groups can serve one-another.

For discussion.

SERVICE

Mark 10: For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Philippians 2:7... made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

In Mark Jesus reminds us that his task is that of a servant and that his service will involve giving up his life.

So in being a servant we are to look to Jesus' example.

Luke 22:26 But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.

Jesus' followers were to exercise leadership and show greatness by their service to others. This service I take it is acting in such a way as to fulfil the needs of others.

Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

Freedom is not to be used for sinful, and in the context, selfish purposes rather it is to be used in service of one another. The Greek word used here is the verb derived from the noun used of slaves so the service is the service of the slave who is totally committed to the master.

Ephesians 4:12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

In this context the works of service are what are to flow from the exercise of the gifts of the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists and Pastor-Teachers. We are to use our God given gifts and talents to equip each other for service so that the body of Christ can be edified.

Ephesians 6:7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people,

The term 'wholehearted' suggests that we put all of ourselves into it seeking to serve in whatever ways and places we can. Also, It is not men that we are serving but the Lord God himself.





1 Peter 4:10-11 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, ... If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

All gifts are to be used to serve others (See also I Corinthians 12v7) and the specific gift of service should be rendered with the strength that God provides. Note also that the praise for the service is not to be directed to the server but to God who supplies all things.

1 Peter 5:2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve;

This passage turns upside down our world's view of how leadership is to be gone about. It does not speak of assertiveness, of domination, of power, or manipulation it speaks of the leader being one who serves eagerly. This service as we have seen is both to the ones the person leads and to the ONE who is the chief overseer, God himself.

So service is activity towards others seeking to do good for them, often at some cost to ourselves.

Study 7	Fellowship on the Road: Other-Person-Centredness		
<i>To be selfish is the default human condition. To think of one's own benefit. The disciple's attitude is to the opposite. – to centre ourselves on others. Being other-person-centred is to seek the good of the other without thought of self. To act positively for the other person</i>			
	Philippians 2:2-4	Luke 10:29-37	Romans 5:6-8 1 Peter 3:8-9
What shines from the Passage? 	In this important passage Paul is encouraging his readers to emulate Jesus in their attitudes.	This is the o-so-familiar Good Samaritan story which illustrates the nature of other-person-centredness.	<u>Romans 5</u> : v8 'while we were still sinners ...' What a statement of God's love and unselfish grace.
What questions does the passage raise? 	Specifically in v4 looking to the interests of others – other-person-centredness. Foulkes (NBC) quoting Cranfield: " <i>Such unity will only come when Christians are humble and bold enough to lay hold on the unity already given in Christ and to take it more seriously than their own self-importance...</i> "	The priest and the Levite have self-related concerns and pass by. The Samaritan (to Jesus' hearers a shocking choice for a hero) however, puts the interest of the man above his own and acts to help him.	<u>1 Peter 3</u> : This, pretty much, provides a working definition of Other-Person-Centredness.
What personal response can you see? 			
What are you prompted to pray about? 		It is interesting that in the introduction the questioner (see v25ff) is described as wanting to 'justify himself'.	

Other Passages to Consider: Philippians 2:1-13; Romans 15:1-3; 1 Corinthians 10:24; Proverbs 25:8-27

Philippians 2: It is worth reading this whole section of the chapter again in order to see what a great example Jesus is of other-person-centredness.

Romans 15 and 1 Corinthians 10: Parallel thoughts to those in Philippians 2. Though in both cases the discussion is about meat sacrificed to idols the principle still applies.

Proverbs 25: As an exercise, go through these verses and consider which of these proverbs speak of an attitude of other-person-centredness. (You might like to consider the ones that speak of the opposite as well). Like all of Proverbs it is a great piece of advice on common-sense Godly living.

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. Discuss or consider how 'Other-Person-Centredness' works or should work.

For Discussion

Other-Person Centredness means that we will give consideration to the needs of the people around us before we consider our own selfish ends. Once again it is Jesus who is the prime example, his Other-Person Centredness led him to die in agony on the cross for those who were his enemies (Romans 5v8).

2. During his life in what ways did Jesus demonstrate other-person-centredness?

For Discussion

It is interesting how often Jesus is said to have had compassion. Sometimes it is on the crowds, sometimes it is on individuals.

3. 'Other Person Centredness is activity; it is not merely benevolence but beneficence.' * Discuss.

For discussion

4. When do you most struggle with being self-centred?

For Discussion.

*David Broughton Knox The Everlasting God (Homebush West, Lancer, 1988) p132.

OTHER PERSON CENTREDNESS

We move now to the concept of Other Person Centredness

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,

Here Paul sets out the contrast which creates the term Other-Person-Centredness. 'Selfish ambition' points to the self-centredness which dominates so much of the way people think in our world where self-esteem and self-promotion are so prominent. Paul says this is not the way the Christian is to think rather he is 'to consider others better than' himself. This is an act of humility and will promote actions of service that are not mere self-serving.

Luke 10:29-37: But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"





In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Here the Samaritan is the one who puts the needs of others before his own and tends the wounded man, not for his own glory but simply as the right thing to do.

So Other-Person Centredness means that we will give consideration to the needs of the people around us before we consider our own selfish ends. Once again it is Jesus who is the prime example, his Other-Person Centredness led him to die in agony on the cross for those who were his enemies (Romans 5v8)

Study 8	Fellowship on the Road: Humility		
<i>Humility is having a right view of yourself in relation to others and in relation to GOD. It does not put self, down but nor does it inflate self. Jesus perfectly illustrates and exemplifies humility by becoming man, living an earthly life and dying as a man to bring us into right relationship with himself and his father.</i>			
	Philippians 2:5-11	Micah 6:6-8	Luke 18:9-14 James 3:13-16 Isaiah 66:2
What shines from the Passage? 	Foulkes (TNTC): <i>“The best way that Paul can encourage his friends in Philippi to live in humility, and so to have true fellowship and unity, is by reminding them of the example of Christ. As he speaks of the humiliation that Jesus accepted and then his exaltation as Lord of all, ... we have a very important statement of what was believed from the beginning of the life of the church about the true humanity and the deity of Christ.”</i>	Verse 8 is as good a summary of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. Prior (BST) <i>“Micah’s threefold requirement cannot, therefore, be conveniently dissected, packaged and labelled. The three qualities hold together. It is only by applying ourselves to the third (to walk humbly with your God), that we can begin to practise the first two (to do justice, and to love kindness). ... Justice and kindness are, in fact, essential qualities in the nature of God himself.²⁷ They do not come down from heaven wrapped in parcels. They are expressed in and through people who walk humbly with their God.”</i>	Luke 18: This is the classic parable and illustration of the concept of humility. James 3: Here the contrast is between humility and selfish ambition. Isaiah 66: Reinforces of what Micah says. Motyer TOTC) <i>“The humble are, socially, those who are at the bottom of life’s heap, dominated by stronger forces and interests; religiously, they are those who willingly take the lowest place before God.”</i>
What questions does the passage raise? 			
What personal response can you see? 			
What are you prompted to pray about? 			

Other Passages to Consider: Proverbs 22:4; Isaiah 53; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5. Proverbs 22: This is surely a counter-cultural statement. In our world riches etc are associated with pride and self sufficiency.

Isaiah 53: Again, the Suffering Servant is a perfect example of humility.

2 Corinthians 8 and Galatians 4: Again, the example of Jesus.

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. What is striking about Jesus’ humility?

He is after all – God (The Supreme Being, the Creator, The LORD, King of Kings) and yet he enters our world as a baby and gets his feet dusty and dirty in the world of 1st Century Palestine. Read Philippians 2 1-13 again.

2. What is the relationship between ‘fear of the Lord’ and humility?

The ‘Fear of the Lord’ is the basis of a correct humble view of ourselves. Humility in the biblical sense means each person having a right and proper view of himself which is in turn informed by having a right and proper view of God.

3. In the Gospels how does Jesus demonstrate humility?

For discussion. Dying on the cross is the supreme example, washing feet is another and then his compassionate way of dealing with people.

4. ‘Lord, it’s hard to be humble ...’ goes the song. Why is it hard to be humble?

For discussion

HUMILITY

A third element to consider in regard to relationships is humility. Humility in the biblical sense means each person having a right and proper view of himself which is in turn informed by having a right and proper view of God.

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

The threefold action required here of acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with God is connected intimately with the sense of knowing who God is. To walk humbly with God is to recognize the greatness of God, his claims on us and to live life accordingly, this is true worship. Isaiah (and Proverbs) makes much the same point:

Isaiah 66:2 Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD.

Proverbs 22:4 Humility is the fear of the LORD; its wages are riches and honor and life.

In Deuteronomy we read that humility is one result of the way God deals with us:

Deuteronomy 8:3 He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

Turning to the New Testament we see that it is Jesus who is the fullest example of humility:

PHI 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

PHI 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,

In terms of how we practice humility there can be no better definition of it than 'consider others better than yourself' That is, once we have a right view of God as the all wise, caring, knowing, redeeming, reconciling, justifying creator then we will see ourselves rightly and far from seeing ourselves as better than others we will rather be humbled and want to serve them from an other-person centred heart.

1 Peter 5:6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.

James 3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.





Ephesians 4:2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Each of these verses command us to be humble. It is to be part of the attitudes we are to have as Christians. James 3v13 is particularly interesting in that humility is linked with wisdom which in the Old Testament is so often linked with the fear of the Lord. Again it is stressed that it is only as we see God as he is and ourselves as we really are that we will be able to be truly humble.

Luke 18:14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

In summing up the parable of 'The Pharisee and the Publican' Jesus points out the reality of the outcome of pride and humility.

Humility is not an attitude held in great regard by our world. However the scripture says otherwise and urges us to a humility that recognises our sinfulness and our need of God who is Saviour.

Study 9	Fellowship on the Road: LOVE		
<i>'Over all put on love' Love is the glue that binds all our Christian relationships and our behaviour. We are to love as Christ loved us. Love is at its essence a verb – it is something we do, not merely some feeling we experience or conjure up - and that means we seek to do good for others even when we don't feel like it and when it is hard. We love others.</i>			
	1 Corinthians 13:1-13	Exodus 34:6-7	Mark 12:28-34 John 13:34-35 Proverbs 15:17; 21:21
What shines from the Passage? 	Highly favoured at weddings this verse speaks much more widely than that specific context	In response to a request by Moses 'to see God's glory' (Ex 33:18ff) God passes by Moses and declares who he is in these words.	<u>Mark 12</u> : Jesus repeats the OT injunction to love God and love your neighbour.
What questions does the passage raise? 	between a man and a woman. This is true 'agape' love which is a reflection of God's love.	So the LORD declares himself to be these things mostly related to His love for His people.	<u>John 13</u> :Guthrie (NBC): "Commands to love were already known in the sense of the highest devotion to God, but Jesus' command that the disciples should love one another was new both in its scope and its motivation, which sprang from the love Jesus had for them."
What personal response can you see? 	Worth considering how you would or do show each characteristic of love mentioned here to those around you and to your neighbour.	With the balancing message of judgment for those who remain 'guilty.'	<u>Proverbs 15:17; 21:21</u> : Truth again from Proverbs.
What are you prompted to pray about? 	Packer (Concise Theology):" <i>Neighbor-love is profiled in 1 Corinthians 13:4–8. Its total lack of self-concern is breathtaking. Neighbor-love seeks the neighbor's good, and the true measure of it is how much it gives to that end.</i> "	Alexander (NBC): "The revelation of these divine characteristics to Moses was so significant that this passage is echoed on six other occasions in the OT (Ne. 9:17; Pss. 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jon. 4:2)"	

Other Passages to Consider: John 15:12-13; 1 John 3:16 -18; 4:7-11

John 15: On the eve of his death Jesus reiterates his command to love one another with His love for them, ultimately demonstrated in the cross, as the supreme example.

1 John 3: Love is to be shown in actions – even to the point of death – Now there is a challenge!

1 John 4: Again, John the apostle reinforces the importance of both Jesus' love, shown in the cross, and our love for one another in imitation of that.

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. When the Bible speaks about Love what is it talking about?

No space here to do this justice. Perhaps it is best to go back to the passages we have looked at and reflect again on what they mean.

2. "Love is a verb. What does that mean for us?"

For Discussion.

Packer (Concise Theology): "Love is a principle of action rather than of emotion. It is a purpose of honoring and benefiting the other party. It is a matter of doing things for people out of compassion for their need, whether or not we feel personal affection for them. It is by their active love to one another that Jesus' disciples are to be recognized (John 13:34–35)."

3. Consider Matthew 5:43-44. How do we go about doing that?

Now that is a challenge. But it is what God's love is.

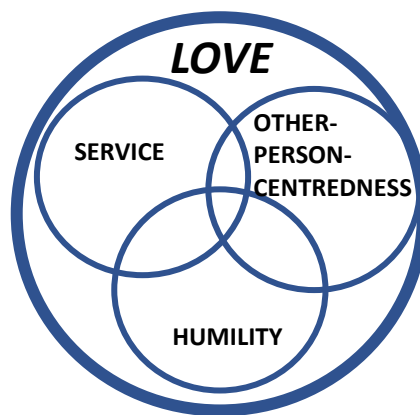
4. How can you show true Christian love to someone new this week?

For Discussion.

LOVE

Before we continue to look at the final of these four elements we should pause to consider how they relate to one another. It seems to me that Service is the way we act towards other people, it is what we do, we serve. Other-Person Centredness then is the attitude we have towards others, we are not self-centred but Other-Person Centred. Our attitude is to put others first and so we serve them. Then, Humility is our attitude to ourselves, we have a right view of ourselves informed by our view of God and so that humility issues in Other-Person Centredness and Service.

Love, then, is the basis for the other three. For without true Christian love there can be no humility, no Other-Person Centredness, and no true service. To some extent this can be represented by the following diagram:



Our world has a very twisted view of what Love is.

1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

God's love is the true example of love, and it is shown best in the man Jesus dying in agony on the cross. God's love is, from the beginning, truly selfless love. In essence God neither wants nor needs us, he acts out of love for us.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

In the cross the death of Christ demonstrates this unconditional love.

Exodus 34:6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,

When God reveals himself to Moses it is the 'loving' side of His character that has precedence. It is this loving God who has acted to save his people from Egypt and will continue to act to save them right through their history up to Jesus, the one who brings the ultimate salvation.

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a: If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails.

The truths contained here are self-evident. Love is to act in putting the interest of others first. It is positive regard for others putting aside the negative aspects of our character.

1 Corinthians 13:13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Paul finishes his chapter on love with this great assertion: Love is Great.

Proverbs 15:1 Better a small serving of vegetables with love than a fattened calf with hatred.

Proverbs 21:21 Whoever pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor.

These verses of wisdom speak poignantly of the nature of love and its outcome in the lives of those who practice it. Love, as well as being the foundation of good relationships, also enhances them and builds the good things in life.

Matthew 5:43-44 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

To love enemies is a tall order and yet that is what Jesus demands. He points out in the context that even the 'tax collectors' love those who love them and that his followers are to do more than this. Jesus again is the supreme example.

Mark 12:30-31 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

When asked which is the greatest commandment Jesus gives this reply. We need to note that Jesus is saying that the Law is a law of love and it is out of love that obedience will grow (John 14v15). Also connected here are our love of God and our love of our neighbour. John Calvin says "If we rightly direct our love, we must first turn our eyes not to man, but to God, who bids us extend to all men the love we bear to him, that this may be an unchanging principle: whatever the character of the man, we must love him because we love God."

John 13:34-35 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

How are we to love? We are to love as Jesus did. The second truth here is that it is in looking at the quality of our relationships that unbelievers should see Jesus.





Galatians 5:22-23a But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

In this passage Paul points out that it is the action of God the Holy Spirit in us that will produce Love in our lives.

1 John 3:18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

Whilst it is true that love is an attitude and a feeling it must also be said that as we act positively toward people and build a relationship we will feel a growing love for them out of our growing knowledge and regard for them as people. Dostoyevsky apparently once wrote "Love in action is much more terrible than love in dreams."

So what is love? Love is a positive regard for all of those around us, the lovely and the unlovely and it is acting in a positive way towards them.

Study 10	Calling Others to Join the Walk		
<i>'One beggar telling another where to find food' is one way of characterising the act of one disciple 'making' another. We have the greatest of good news and Jesus makes it plain that we are to share it so that others may come under the Lordship of Jesus and know salvation and reconciliation.</i>			
	Matthew 28:16-20	Isaiah 49:5-6	1 Peter 2:11-12 1 Peter 3:15-16
What shines from the Passage? 	France (TNTC): <i>"Jesus' universal Lordship now demands a universal mission."</i> The elements of this are important:	This passage simply reminds us that it has always been God's plan to save people from every background and race.	<u>1 Peter 2</u> : Peter points out to his readers that s their lives, their walk as disciples of Jesus, are always to be a witness to the Lord whom they serve.
What questions does the passage raise? 	Baptising – bringing them into the faith. Teaching – Which in simple terms is		<u>1 Peter 3</u> : 'Be prepared' to speak of your faith, which amounts to hope.
What personal response can you see? 	Discipling which is what these studies have been all about. Note also the assurance of Jesus presence. Which is		Great words for our time. Note also 2 Timothy 4:2
What are you prompted to pray about? 	accomplished via the Holy Spirit.		

Other Passages to Consider: Luke 24:46-48; Colossians 1:28-29; Genesis 12:1-3; 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

Luke 24: This is Luke's equivalent to the Matthew 28 passage. The message is about turning from sin and being forgiven, and it goes to all. Those standing there have been eye-witnesses of how this was accomplished. See also Acts 1:8

Colossians 1: 'Everyone mature in Christ' is where we a heading as we Go, Make, Grow Disciples.

Genesis 12: A reminder that this was part of God's plan all along.

2 Timothy 4: An apt description of our time and a challenge to keep on keeping on!

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

- 1. 'Go, Make, Grow Disciples' is our church mission statement. What does it mean to you? Where do you see your gifts working toward this?**

Discuss.

It is important to realise:

First that we are all to seek to share the Gospel in the situations in which we find ourselves.

Second that some people have a special gift of evangelism and they should be encouraged and supported to use that in our community.

Third that we all have a responsibility to build one-another up in our discipleship especially those who are new believers.

- 2. Share your experiences of attempting to communicate the gospel with a non-Christian.**





For discussion.

- 3. What makes it hard to share the gospel? (Be honest with yourself.)**

For reflection and possibly discussion

- 4. Who should you be praying for an opportunity to share the Gospel with?**

Write for yourself a list.

Study 11	'The Road Goes Ever On'		
<i>The disciple of Jesus is a creature full of hope. If you belong to Jesus, you have the certain knowledge that one way or another you will one day enter his glorious presence and there dwell for ever. Part of this is Jesus' certain promise that he is coming back and that on that day everything will be put right. Amen, praise the Lord.</i>			
	Luke 17:20-37	Isaiah 65:17-25	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. Revelation 21:1-8 1 Peter 1:1
What shines from the Passage? 	This is one of the passages in the gospels where Jesus speaks of his second coming. When he is revealed in his full glory. It will be an ordinary day with ordinary activities with an extraordinary ending. Implied is that it will be both a day of judgement and salvation.	This is a glimpse of the new heavens and the new earth. First it is worthwhile letting the images and descriptions fire your imagination and then realise that this is what God has in store for his faithful people.	<u>1 Thessalonians 5:</u> These are great words of encouragement and promise. We are encouraged to behave as people of the 'day' and the promise is of the revelation of the fullness of our salvation. <u>Revelation 21:</u> WOW <u>1 Peter 1:</u> This is a reminder that we are indeed not citizens of the kingdoms of this earth but citizens of heaven. See Philippians 3:20
What questions does the passage raise? 			
What personal response can you see? 			
What are you prompted to pray about? 			

Other Passages to Consider: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 14:1-3

1 Thessalonians 4: Here are great words of assurance for the Thessalonians Christians and for us. Jesus is coming again to take us to live with him.

John 14: Again here are assuring words of hope.

Some Questions/Thoughts to Consider.

1. Discuss Romans 15:4.

What does Paul mean by saying 'we might have hope'? Where is he saying we find the basis of that hope.

Paul is directing us to the scriptures and thus to Jesus to find and be encouraged by true hope.

2. What does the word 'hope' mean to you?

For discussion.

3. "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul" (Hebrews 6:19). Discuss

Our hope is not just a warm feeling and vague view of the future. It is a certain 'anchored' hope. Firm and secure.

4. What does the prospect of 'heaven' mean to you in your daily life?

For discussion.