

CELL NOTES 15/3/10

ICE BREAKER

Share a good childhood memory of your father, or a father figure from your early years.

THEME

I believe in God the father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

Reading; Matthew 6 : 25 - 34

SERMON OUTLINE

- 1) Make a list of 6 things you believe in.
- 2) From "Soul of Britain" survey, 26% believe in a personal God.
- 3) From the earliest days of the Christian faith, when Christians were a persecuted, counter-cultural minority, they have declared their faith, publicly, corporately and aloud.
- 4) We are apt to have different levels of belief
 - Public convictions – things we pay lip service to, but perhaps with little or no real belief or commitment
 - Private convictions – things we think we believe, but when put under pressure may find we behave in a different way (e.g. I believe in honesty, but when that becomes inconvenient . .)
 - Core convictions – things we really believe, as evidenced by our behaviour – which may come as a shock to us (e.g. "I believe it pays to be nicest to people who are wealthy, attractive, smart, important.")
- 5) Why may 2 people who both recite the creed in fact behave in very different ways?
Depends on which level their belief is operating. Have they really been mastered by it, or is it more at the level of joining in with an activity, whereas real belief lies somewhere else?
- 6) Our experience of earthly fathers will vary across a huge spectrum. Our Biblical passage presents a God, who invites us into an ideal father/child relationship, which blends intimacy and freedom, respect and dependence.
- 7) Yet this same Father is the creator of all we see – all human power, of whatever type we may think, derives from Him.
- 8) So what is faith? Not having all the answers, are having loads of cast-iron certainties. It is having a relationship of trust in the Father, which comes via personal commitment to Jesus. It is relationship, not knowledge, based.
- 9) v33 includes a huge challenge and a huge promise – the invitation is to be a believer in Jesus at every level.

QUESTIONS OF APPLICATION

- 1) Read the passage. What does God say to you through that, or what did He say to you on Sunday?
- 2) What might be 6 things you really believe in – as evidenced by your life-style?
- 3) How do you relate to the idea of God as father?
- 4) Is there a specific matter you are struggling to trust God in at the moment? Is there an opportunity to pray for each other here?