

CELL NOTES 17/9/07

ICE BREAKER

Do you have a childhood or teenage memory of a local or national tragedy that you felt affected by in some way?

THEME

Making sense of suffering
Reading Luke 13 : 1 – 9

SERMON OUTLINE

- 1) John Lennon “Life is what happens to you while you are making other plans.”
- 2) We can't make sense of suffering – as Michael sees repeatedly in the lives of people at St Luke's. Suffering is universal –the answer to “Why” will take all eternity to understand.
- 3) The passage refuses the suggestion that suffering is the direct result of personal sin, and puts it in the context of a call to repentance.
- 4) At St Luke's, Michael often sees, that as death approaches, people have an urge to put their life in order – repentance is part of this.
- 5) Example of parents of girl shot at Columbine, for refusing to deny Jesus.
- 6) Obituary of Jane Tomlinson – inspiring example of somebody suffering personally, but able to go beyond that to help others (Also St John Chrysostom quote).
- 7) Tapestry. Meaningless jumble of threads on back. “God is love” in gold on front.
- 8) Bible gives hooks to help face suffering. Jesus suffered immensely. In Him there is a hope and a way.
- 9) In facing those suffering we need to sit beside, not walk in front.
- 10) Churchill “We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”
- 11) Give Christ others. Help pain be a route to repentance for them and ourselves.

QUESTIONS OF APPLICATION

- 1) Read the passage. What do you make of it?
- 2) When have you asked, "Why?" What conclusion did you come to?
- 3) What difference does it / has it make to you when facing suffering, to realise that Jesus also suffered immensely?
- 4) How do you react to others facing suffering?
- 5) Does anybody have a story of past experience of pain, or want to share about a painful situation currently being faced?