

CELL NOTES 22/2/10

ICE BREAKER

If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you choose?

THEME

Keeping on
Reading; Phil 3 : 12 - 21

SERMON OUTLINE

- 1) Paul presents himself as a role model, in an era before the New Testament. Who are ours, and who sees us as a role model?
- 2) Citizens of Rome were to promote the glory of Rome – in a similar way we are to be citizens of heaven.
- 3) Paul acknowledges his shortcomings in the passage – that’s a relief!
- 4) “Perfection” (v12) means maturity, rather than sinlessness. Maturity involves determination and allowing the Holy Spirit to work in us.
- 5) Metaphor of a cheese
 - Made from milk that has gone off (as have we)
 - Rennet (cf the Holy Spirit) has been added
 - It’s been churned up a lot
 - The useless way is then separated from the valuable curds – and this is finalised by the use of pressure
 - All this takes time, but a mature cheese is the result.
- 6) Metaphor of the Hope Valley walk
 - Struggle to the first summit – but glorious when arrive
 - Elation replaced by disappointment, as then have to proceed downhill
 - Then a period of steady progress along the ridge – needing to push on, and avoid the temptation of the escape-route, downhill paths.
 - After the end of the ridge, a really hard part, as have to descend
 - In the bottom, just need to press on through a boring part – and not look back at the summit we have previously been on.
- 6) Reality of Christian life is the mixture of the high points, but also difficult, mundane, at times really unpleasant.
- 7) Mother Teresa “I have been told God loves me. In reality there are times when the reality of coldness and darkness is so great that nothing touches my soul.”
- 8) Ultimately we have a stark choice of ambition in life – to make Jesus the very centre, or be solely occupied with our own desires.
- 9) We need to press on, and do it with each other (as George did on the Hope Valley walk), and know that we will be role models for those within and outside the church.

QUESTIONS OF APPLICATION

- 1) Read the passage. What strikes you most? What did God say to you on Sunday?
- 2) If you compare your Christian walk to the Hope Valley Walk, at which stage are you right now?
- 3) Are you more likely to strive for excellence in your secular life or spiritual life?
- 4) Who is a role model for you at the moment, and for whom are you a model?