

Small Group Notes – 22nd October 2017

Theme: Sunday worship transforms Monday to Saturday

Introduction/Ice Breaker

It's one thing to believe that anything we do can be a way of worshipping God. But to think, feel and live this reality in the midst of the tasks and jobs we do during the week is not always easy. We get tired, bored, distracted, frustrated and so on. This means it can be much easier to feel like we are worshipping God when we sing, pray and take communion in church services than it does when we are inputting data, packing a lunch box or walking a customer to where the ground almonds are located. Think about a task that you perform regularly, whether it's something in your workplace, in your voluntary activities, or something around the home or garden.

- To what extent do you typically see it as a form of worship?
- What makes an action an act of worship?

Reading: Colossians 3:12-17

To Consider:

Though small in size, the letter to the Colossians beautifully reveals the depths of Christ's love, the scope of his mission and his absolute centrality to all of life. Jesus changes everything: bringing freedom, meaning, hope and a whole new way of living. We don't know exactly who was in the congregation to whom Paul wrote, but we do know that at least a good number were slaves. Slavery was common in the Roman Empire. Historians estimate that between a third to over half of the population were slaves. They did a wide range of jobs, including cooking, childcare, teaching, mining, practising medicine, farming and asset management. Conditions varied greatly: some fared well under thoughtful owners, whereas others were subjected to incredibly harsh treatment, including physical beatings and sexual abuse. Regardless of what they did or how they were treated, slaves had no legal rights and were thought of as 'speaking tools' rather than people worthy of dignity and respect.

- What does Paul say about our identity as Christians in 3:12?
- Bearing in mind the people he was writing to here, what impact might his words have had upon the way they viewed themselves?

- 3:12-16 describes actions and characteristics appropriate for God's chosen, holy and dearly loved people. What are these? According to these verses, what role can gathered worship play in helping us to become people who live and act this way? Take a look at verse 17.
- What do you think it means to do all things 'in the name of the Lord Jesus'?
- How might this help you see your day-to-day tasks in a fresh light? How might seeing your day-to-day tasks as worship help you to feel more connected to God throughout the week?
- What could you do to remind yourself at the start, middle and/or end of the day that we worship God through our actions?
- As a group, how could you help one another in this?
- How might this hope we've reflected on transform our everyday lives this week?

A time of prayer to commit to worship:

Use the verses below, each of which refer to our hands, to guide you in your prayers for the things you have been discussing and the tasks that lie ahead this week. You may find it helpful to read one verse, have one or two people pray around it, then read the next one, pray again, and so forth.

- 'I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands'. (Psalm 63:4)
- We may sin, but through Christ we may know forgiveness: 'Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart.' (Psalm 24:3-4)
- God grants us strength and courage: 'They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed." But I prayed, "Now strengthen my hands."' (Nehemiah 6:9)
- We depend on God: 'Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand'. (Isaiah 64:8)