

Monday 26th October 2020

Read: Galatians 5 v24 – 26

Chat: Over the past few weeks in church we have been hearing about how as Christians, the Spirit works in us and what that looks like in our actions towards others and our own behaviour. Paul in his letter to the Galatians shows us the fruit of the Spirit working through us is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control.

This week through our Family Fellowship devotions we will be discussing how the Holy Spirit transforms our lives and how we as Christians are made alive in Christ and what that looks like. God has given us the Holy Spirit to help us and guide us to live for Him. As the week goes on, we will begin to look at this amazing transformation that only God's grace can provide.

Think: In today's passage think about:

- What it means for us to belong to Christ and to have our own sinful desires crucified through what Jesus did for us on the cross.
- What does it mean to "keep in step" with the Spirit and what does this look like?

Pray: Take some time to pray and thank God for what His Son did for us on the cross so that His Holy Spirit may live and work in us.

Tuesday 27th October 2020

Read: Ephesians 2 v1 – 7

Chat: This chapter in Ephesians details the life changing transformation the Holy Spirit brings for us. It shows how our lives were once completely against God but with the Holy Spirit in us, we have complete access to God through His Holy Spirit. This is quite a hard-hitting passage from verse 1 to 3. Paul highlights how terrible our lives are before we receive the saving and undeserving grace of God. He says we are dead to our trespasses, sons of disobedience and children of wrath, which basically means anger. He isn't painting a very nice picture of our lives. When we read on into verses 4 to 7, the situation gets so much better! Paul writes that because of what God has done for us we are made alive through Christ. It is this gift of grace where God sent His Son to die for us that gives us life!

Think: This is some amazing news for us as Christians. Paul shows us this amazing transformation in our lives. Think about these questions:

- What do you think a life that Paul describes in verses 1 to 3 looks like?
- How did God show his mercy and grace for us that we might be saved?
- How should we react to this great news that God has made a way for us to be saved?

Pray: Thank God for his grace and mercy towards us. Although we may be Christians, pray that God will continue to show us how much he loves us when we make mistakes.

Wednesday 28th October 2020

Read: Ephesians 2 v 8 – 10

Chat: In these next few verses Paul writes that although we may be saved, and that's a wonderful thing, we did not do anything ourselves to earn it. If you think about it, it's a bit like a birthday present. There isn't really anything that you do to earn a birthday present. They are given to you by someone because you are loved by them. It's a gift. God's grace is a gift to us that we cannot earn or work for. It is given to us by Him because he loves us. Paul says that because God has given this gift of grace to us, we cannot boast or brag about receiving this gift as we have not put any real effort or work in to earn it. As Christians, having accepted this gift of grace, we are made a new in Christ and our purpose is to live for Him and love others as we are loved by Christ.

Think: This is amazing news! We've been given a gift so massive that we could not earn it even if we tried! I'm sure some of you have been given brilliant gifts! I can remember the best gift I ever got as being a Nintendo Gameboy Colour but that doesn't even begin compare to what gift God has given us! We can only do good works if Christ lives in us. Have a think about these questions:

- What good works can we do to show others that we have accepted God's gift?
- If we can't take any credit for earning this gift, who can we give the praise to and why?

Pray: Take some time thanking God for this gift and ask Him to help us to live for Him each day through our actions.

Thursday 29th October 2020

Read: Ephesians 2 v11 – 17

Chat: In these few verses Paul is reminding the Ephesian Christians that at one time they were once far away and separated from God and his wonderful promises to us. He said they had no hope. As Christians, we can rejoice in the hope and life that Jesus brings by trusting Him. Paul highlights how this has been done through Jesus' sacrifice for us on the cross, again relating back to this gift of Salvation and the comfort of the Holy Spirit that God has given us. As we know, one of God's promises to us as Christians is the help of the Holy Spirit that will live in us when we accept God's gift of Salvation. It is through the help of God's Holy Spirit that we can live for God through our actions and show the fruit of the Holy Spirit living in us. Paul writes that by accepting God's gift of salvation that we are created as a new person in Jesus which brings us close to God.

Think: Have you ever had anything that needed fixed or some care and attention? Like your bike? When you give your bike a good service and maybe replace some worn out parts it will ride as good as new! God's promise to us is that we are made new! Not made as good as new, we are a brand-new person created to live for Him. That's like having a broken bike and instead of fixing it you just throw it away and get a brand new one!

- What does it mean to be created a new man like it says in verse 15?
- Why are we so far away and separated from God?
- What can be done to bring us closer to God?

Pray: Take some time to thank God that He has made a way for us to become close to Him.

Friday 30thth October 2020

Read: Ephesians 2 v18 – 22

Chat: In these verses Paul shows us how our relationship with God once we accept His gift of salvation looks. Before we were strangers to God but now we are so close to God that we are actually part of His family! By accepting this gift of salvation through what Jesus did for us on the cross, we receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives us this unlimited access to God. This relationship is only made possible through what Jesus has done for us, this is why Paul says it is all built on Him. If you have ever seen a big stone castle, like Carrickfergus Castle, the strongest part of the building is called the cornerstone. Without the cornerstone, the building become weak and is vulnerable to attacks. That's how important Jesus is in this. Without Him, this relationship is not possible. By us being a part of this structure, we are made new and built to be a place so God can live in us. This can only happen through the help of the Holy Spirit and by living our lives to show the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Think: In the last part of this chapter we learn how important Jesus is in our relationship with God. Have a think about these questions:

- What would happen to our lives if we didn't build them with Jesus as the cornerstone?
- What does a life with Jesus as the cornerstone look like on the outside to others? Think back to fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Saturday 31st October 2020

Read: Galatians 5 v24 – 26

Chat: Having looked at how the Holy Spirit works in our life and how we are given this gift of the Holy Spirit, we are going to look back to these 3 verses. If we have the Holy Spirit living in us, we are no longer dead to sin but will have life to the full. Our old sinful self has died and we are made new, not like new. Completely new! If we really are made new and have accepted God's wonderful gift of salvation, we are told by Paul that we must live in a way that shows through our actions that we are Christians. Let the Holy Spirit show its fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. By living a life like this we will truly be loving for God.

Think: This passage has a big challenge for us all! If we really do call ourselves Christians by having the Holy Spirit live in us, let's keep in line with how we are to act and show the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

- How can you show the fruit of the Holy Spirit through your actions towards others?

Pray: Take some time now as a family and pray. Pray that while we are now all spending more time at home than normal and still getting used to new daily routines that we will continue to show the fruit of the Holy Spirit living in us. Pray that when we return to school or the workplace that people will see a difference in us and how we act.

Sunday 1st November 2020

Chat: Don't forget to watch Church today. The passage is Galatians 6 v1 – 6 if you want to get your Bible's open afterwards to discuss what has been said in the service today and what you learnt from the Children's Talk.

Pray: As another week of church online and at home passes, pray as a family for all of those in church that we may not see very regularly now. Thank God for the gifts and talents he has given to those people that make it possible for us to have a church service to watch each week, from the tech, music, children's talk, sermon and our mission partners.