

Home Group Series 2024

3. Witnessing with the Word.

Some of you may remember that we once likened the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to taking over a house and making it our home - which, of course involves moving into each room – throwing out the junk we might find there, and then installing the new furniture. In a way it was something I had to do for real this summer after my wife went home to be with the Lord, and I was left living alone. I had to practically rescheme the place to make my life easier, as well as getting rid of all sorts of stuff, for which I no longer had any use.

Fortunately, I have a very down-to-earth daughter who came to my rescue (she was once a theatre sister!) and she stiffened my resolve, which meant that we made a very good start, and a lot of stuff went. I say ‘start’ in that I couldn’t sort out, ditch or save everything I wanted or might need overnight, especially as a lot of the stuff happens to be a collection amassed over 80 years! It’s still an ongoing task. But it sheds a light on what the Holy Spirit might be doing in our lives – that is if we let Him!

Very simply, as He takes up residence in us, he wants to turn our lives inside out, in that He wants to make our hearts His home as He makes us like Jesus. That will mean coming to terms with those things which He hates, facing up to them, and getting rid of them (He can give us the strength to do it!) – but, let’s face it, there are a good number of rooms in our lives to sort out, aren’t there?

Just think of a few – your time, your cash, your friends, your pastimes, your marriage, your family, your attitudes, your values, your morals, your ambitions, your faith, your loves and hates etc.

If we really mean business with Christ, it will mean asking Him what He wants us to do in each room and – if we take His Word seriously – *doing it!* That’s the way the Spirit gets a foothold in our lives as He goes on to teach us the sometimes-harder lessons that we may have to learn. Seriously, if necessary, ask Him into your life again and let Him do what He wants to do with you.

And if you stumble along the way, and get things wrong, remember that the Apostle Paul himself confessed, ‘not that I have obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me’.

JB

Questions for Home Groups

Witnessing with the Word

Acts 6 v1-7

Romans 10 v8-17

Prioritising and Organising

1. How easy do you find prioritising? Share an example where you have prioritised one responsibility over another. Was it the right thing to do?
2. Church contains people from different cultures and who have different preferences and ways of doing things. How can this cause tensions in the church?
3. At St Andrew's we have two Church Wardens, a PCC, a Rector, a Curate, over 15 employed members of staff and about 180 volunteers with different roles. What are the challenges and how do clear roles help?

Prioritising the Word as a Church

4. What kind of worthy things might distract a church from the 'Ministry of the Word'? Are there any you are aware of at St Andrew's and All Saints'?
5. *We are making 2025 a year to focus on the Bible. As a church we'll read through the whole Bible together (with different streams for different levels). We'll have sessions on How to read the Bible (for everyone), How to teach the Bible (for Sunday Club, Bible study leaders and Preachers) and How to understand the Bible (for budding theologians!).*
Can you think of ways in which we can witness with the word as a church during that year and beyond?

Prioritising the Word as Individuals

6. How easily do you find yourself distracted from reading the Bible?
7. Can you think of examples where you have witnessed with the word to someone who doesn't yet believe?
8. What structures can you put in place in your life to ensure you prioritise reading the Bible and witnessing with the word?