

Discipleship – Spring 2012 – Week beginning 28th May

Home group / study notes: divisions and unity

Feel free to use as much or as little as you wish. Don't rush the discussions in order to 'finish' the study, and make sure you allow time for the prayer.

These notes invite us to think about our relationships with other Christians whose beliefs might not agree at every point with our own. The issues below are deliberately not the most controversial, but they have all divided churches in the past.

Use this week to jot down topics which you would find helpful to tackle in future teaching and Bible studies and feed back to Jane or Tim.

Feel free to state what you think but **do not argue in the group with people who may hold different views, however strongly you feel. Please respect them.** Use this time to get to know one another better by sharing your minds. Be aware that sometimes God will use other people to challenge our own ideas, or to help us realise we need to ask for more guidance. Encourage people to talk with Tim, one of the readers or clergy, or any mature Christian they respect if issues they find difficult are raised.

Discuss your views on these. In each case:

Whichever view you hold, how far could you work with Christians who hold the other views:

- *Would you be happy for them to worship with you?*
- *Would you be happy for them to teach in church / children's groups?*
- *Would you be happy to do mission with them and direct new Christians to them?*
- *Could you be part of a church whose leadership believed this?*

God the creator

1. Literally as in Gen 1-2?
2. Gen 1-2 gives vital information from God about human nature but is not meant to be taken as science?

Scripture suggestion: Rom 8:18-21

Jesus Christ

1. The only way to salvation
2. Other faiths are all false
3. Other faiths are a mixture of truth and error

Scripture suggestions: John 14:6, Luke 11:23 and Mark 9:38-41

(Remember to be asking the questions above)

The church

1. Essential for correct interpretation of scriptures
2. Essential for salvation
3. No one denomination has the whole truth
4. Special saints are important: the church determines which
5. A local church should be independent of all others – denominations are not necessary

Suggested scripture: Matthew 16:17-19, 3 John:9-12 (Never read 3 John??)

The Holy Spirit

1. Indwells all Christians
2. Must be received separately from becoming a Christian
3. The supernatural gifts are available for all Christians today
4. Speaking in tongues is an essential sign of being Spirit filled

Suggested scriptures: Acts 1:4, Acts 2:38, Eph 1:13-14

Pray for people whose Christian beliefs differ from yours. For other churches in Taunton and nationally. For other Anglican leaders and churches nationally. If you have people in the group unused to praying aloud, get them to simply name one group of people or a church to pray for, then all pause and say, 'Amen'