

“Serving as overseers”- cell group material for w/c 18.9.05

Welcome

What is the scariest thing you have ever been asked to do for someone? How did you feel about taking on the responsibility? Did you think it was fair to ask you?

Worship

You could sing/read a harvest hymn, or have someone read a poem or passage that celebrates the world God has made and his goodness in making it possible for us to enjoy it.

Word

1) The world we're looking after

Read Genesis c1 v 26-31 and c2 v15-20

According to these passages what responsibilities has God given us in regards to creation?

What might this mean in practical terms in the 21st century?

How well are we doing?

What environmental issues face Nettleham and the surrounding communities?

How do we react to them- as citizens, as parents, as property occupiers, as Christians?

Take one of the issues you have mentioned. In the light of the responsibilities God has given you as “overseer” of his creation how would you approach the issue?

Can the church be involved in environmental issues (which are always going to have political implications)?

2) The wealth we're looking after

Read Matthew c25 v14-25

Write down on a piece of paper 3 gifts, abilities, attributes, “things” you have that God has given you. They might be “spiritual” gifts – leading a cell group, speaking in tongues. They could be “artistic” – writing poetry, playing an instrument. They might be aspects of your character or general ability – emotional understanding, being good at maths. They might be physical possessions- your house, your income. (If you find it difficult try and imagine you are someone else who is wanting to describe you to a friend!). Put a code name on the list and put them altogether.

Now get someone to read out the lists one at a time. Can the rest of the group work out who the person is from the description of their “talents”?

If the person is not recognisable then why might this be so? Is it that the talents are not ones which are used much in a church context (tight rope walking, reading hieroglyphics) or might it be that they are not being used/developed at all?

Do the group think that someone has a talent they have not listed? Does the “someone” agree? How can the person be encouraged to use and develop the gift God has given them?

3) Witness

First of all, spend some time thanking God for giving you the responsibility of caring for his world and having “talents” to use for him in that world.

Next, think of how you could use your talents in situations you face in the week ahead. Share briefly with others especially if the answer is not clear.

Pray for each other- make a brief note of the prayers and feed back next week on how God and the person worked it out.

Notes for leaders

- 1) Non Christians have often accused Christians of using Gen 1v28 –“subdue, rule” as a licence to exploit. Remember this was a “pre-fall” command and selfishness has distorted things. N.B. 2v15 “work it and take care of it”
- 2) Local issues might include parking on High St, the proposed new village at Riseholme and the Star Energy proposals for gas storage. Do not be afraid if people disagree but do not let it go on too long. The idea is to show how difficult it can be to apply general principles we all agree on to specific situations – but that unless we do we are not actually being good stewards.
- 3) You will need to have paper and pens for the lists. Some people may be a bit reticent to join in but the idea is to help people understand that God has given gifts to everyone and like the property owner expects us as stewards to use them.