



## Bible Study Discussion Notes

### 4th June: Don't Judge

#### *Matthew 7:1-6*

Jesus is really clear about 'not judging'. Jesus said he didn't come to judge the world but to save it. The Church however has a reputation for being judgemental.

1. How would you define 'judging' and being judgemental?
2. What tensions are there between the need to recognise behaviours and attitudes as being good or bad (don't throw your pearls before swine), and not judging others?
3. What does it mean to take the plank out of our own eye? How does this change what it means to be judgemental?
4. What is the difference between being discerning and being judgemental?
5. When James writes (James 2:13) Mercy triumphs over judgement, what does this tell us about the economy and practice of the Kingdom of God?

## **11th June: Loving the World**

### ***Acts 1:8 Acts 2:8-11***

This is Global Partners Weekend and our preachers celebrate aspects of what it means to be part of the global Church. We consider what we can do, thinking of 'Pray, Give, Go' for inspiration.

1. How important is it today to fulfil the great commission to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19)?
2. How much has our colonial past and our present day cultural mindset inhibited a commitment to global mission?
3. What lessons can we learn from the global Church?
4. What should Woodlands aspire to in terms of its place in a global Church movement?

## **18th June: Kingdom Love**

***Colossians 3:12-25. 1 Corinthians 13. John 13:34-35.***

The Church witnesses to the nature of God and His Kingdom most when it is filled with love. Love is profound- the Greek language has four words for love (Sturge, philia, eros, agape).

Sturge-means 'general affection' It grows out of life together, work and play.

Philia- means friendship.

Eros- is love and romance. how do we handle love, romance, marriage with Christian distinctives.

Agape- used to describe the self giving love of God. how does the love of God break into our human relationships?

1. Sturge: affection. This tends to grow with time. It is a goal for our communities that there is real affection there. How can small groups create contexts that 'fast track' affection?
2. Friendship is important. Jesus had special friends while loving very widely. How do we avoid making cliques while still having deep friends? How do single people in the bible (including Jesus and St Paul) value and practice friendships?
3. Eros. Should Christian romance and marriage be enhanced and different from cultural norms? Should Christians only date/marry Christians, and if so why?
4. How are we doing loving with a kingdom perspective? Do we 'love like the gentiles'? (Matthew 5:43-48) What are distinctives that reflect our call and the life of the Spirit as against normal human loving?
5. Do we discriminate between 'Gift love' and 'Need love'? How do we balance legitimate needs with a call to selfless giving?

## **25th June: Restoration**

***Galatians 6:1 Matthew 5:23-25 Luke 15: 31-32. Genesis 33.***

Restoration is in the heart of God. Restored relationships are beautiful- but costly.

1. There is a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation. What is it?
2. How do we restore broken relationships in the Church? How do we do this, individual to individual?
3. How do we restore people who fall from grace in a corporate sense (as in Galatians 6)? How do we restore leadership for those who we feel have let us down?
4. How can mediation help in restoration?
5. Why are sexual offences so difficult to see restoration from? How should Church respond to people who are on the sex offenders register who want to join Church?