



Holy Trinity Church Lent 2020 Expect More

SMALL GROUP NOTES Week 4 – 'The Desert'

Desert Experiences

As an opening discussion – talk with each other about who in their travels has been to a desert? Whereabouts? What sort of desert? How did you feel? What would have made the experience a lot more scary?

Read together Matthew 4.1-11

If you haven't already heard Adam's sermon on this, you might want to listen via YouTube https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQtRfH8ZqQJPfbEGXfciivw/featured?view_as=subscriber

Self-isolation

Jesus is led by the Spirit into a time of self isolation and trial.

In what ways does the 'isolation' that Jesus experiences at this time in wilderness resonate with your own experiences and feelings?

How are you doing?

What parts of this current crisis are you finding really tough?

Take some time to share with one another about the hard moments/challenges of social distancing.

The wilderness story is a really tough time for Jesus, but out of this trial, much good comes. It is in this time of isolation that Jesus finds his calling, the character to his ministry and a deep reliance and trust in God that influences all he does over the next three years.

In the face of the three temptations,

- he firstly refuses to use his power to satisfy his own craving and instead trusts the Father to provide what he needs.
- Secondly, Jesus refuses to test the Father to prove his love, instead he places his confidence in what he already knows of his Father's character.
- Thirdly, he refuses to take control of his own life and do things his way – instead he chooses the path of obedience and worship.

Jesus walks the way of the wilderness with a firm expectation that whatever is thrown at him, his Father is 'more' – greater, more powerful and trustworthy.

In what ways does Jesus' example help us right now?

Look at the three areas of temptation – **what is the wisdom in each of these moments that we can distil?**

Read Isaiah 58.6-9

The prophet Isaiah reminds us that spiritual fasting is so much more than just reducing food intake. Read the passage together, **in what ways does the passage describe the ministry that Jesus then went on to do?**

How about us? Which parts of this passage are we called to enact?

Think very practically about the current situation –

discuss together ideas of what you could do (or are doing) to reflect the values of Isaiah 58 within your family, neighbourhood, on-line communities.

Are there particular areas of need/inequality we need to be more vigilant about?

Share stories together of ways where your little acts of kindness or response to inequality have made a difference in these last few weeks.

Response

If it is possible, spend some moments praying for one another. Why not commit to each member of the home group phoning one other during the next few days?