



## REAL GOD, REAL CHURCH, REAL LIVES

### REAL CHURCH - Week 2.

#### Real Fellowship

*These notes support the current sermon series; both of which are designed to help us focus upon God and to seek His will for our future as a Church. They can be used by individuals, two to three people or within a house group. A Lenten Toolkit has been compiled to help with this study; it can be found on our website. These studies will be utilized during a Church reflection at Café Church on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2014*

#### Readings

Acts 4: 32-37; Matthew 12: 46-50; Ephesians 4: 1-16; & Psalm 133

**Prayer, Praise and Meditation.** Read and meditate upon Psalm 133 using the *Lectio Divina* method described in the Lenten toolkit

Fellowship: The Greek word for fellowship is *koinonia*, which expresses our common Christian life; what we share as believers. It bears witness to two complimentary truths; what we share in, and what we share out.

#### **Real Fellowship; what we share in (Acts 4: 32-37; Ephs 4: 1-16)**

The Church in Acts abounded in Grace (33) and Paul emphasised Grace to the Church in Ephesus (7). We have fellowship with God the Father, Son and Spirit (1 John 1: 13 & 2 Cor. 13: 14); how does Grace enable and enhance this fellowship, this relationship?

Read the Ephesians passage using the Inductive Bible Study method (Lenten Toolkit) with a focus upon the other aspects of fellowship we share in; Unity and Gifts. How might we apply what we have observed and interpreted in this text within our Church?

*For further Study: Read 1 John 1:1 – 2:27; what is the foundation for Christian Fellowship?*

#### **Real Fellowship; what we share out (Acts 4: 32-37; Ephs 4: 1-16)**

We share in God's Grace, Unity and Gifting, there is a natural

reaction to this; to share out. Describe what you see of this response in the early Church. Reading the Ephesians passage consider how we might show Grace to one another and promote Unity?

Disunity and division are often a problem within Churches. The passage in Ephesians describes how a focus on Christ can not only act against such disunity but actually help the Church to grow. From the passage describe the steps believers and Churches should take to achieve this aim and live lives worthy of our calling (1). How might Matthew 5: 21-26 & 18: 15-17 affect your thinking and behaviour; what does this tell us about Church discipline and its place within fellowship?

The early Church displayed spiritual gifts and roles together with real generosity. Thinking of the roles and gifts listed within Ephesians and material gifts read Romans 12: 1-8 and consider the following questions: how does Paul suggest we determine our ministry; how should we use the gifts God has given us; and what in this passage prevents an emphasis on using “my” gifts to justify individualism or indulgence?

**Final thoughts**

The joy of their fellowship with God flowed over into the lives and fellowship of the believers within the Church in Acts. We should ask ourselves if we sense that joy and witness its consequences in our lives; what may be hindering this joy and fellowship?

**Prayer**

Let us pray for one another; our fellowship of believers

**Future Study**

Please note down an aspect of key learning or a point that you want to study further at Café Church on the 27<sup>th</sup> April:

.....  
.....  
.....

***Real God, Real Church, Real Lives***