



## **REAL GOD, REAL CHURCH, REAL LIVES**

### **REAL GOD - Week 3.**

#### **God the Father; what He does (His doing)**

*These notes support the current sermon series; both of which are designed to help us focus anew 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. They can be read through reasonably quickly or form the basis of deeper consideration and meditation.*

#### **Readings**

Isaiah 40: 21-31, Psalm 23, Ephesians 2: 1-10 & Luke 15: 11-31

#### **Review**

Begin by recalling the key points the Lord guided you into last week when focusing on God the Father – who he is: His sovereignty; His character; His Spirit; and what this meant for you

#### **God Creates**

Read the Isaiah passage. We see God in His throne room as the creator of both us (22a) and Governments (23-24). Now read Romans 13:1 and mediate upon/discuss the issue of where true authority lies. How do Christians respond to unjust rulers, what experiences can you share? What do these issues tell us about God's rule and our role?

God's creative power is truly amazing (Is 40: 22b, 26 & 28). Consider His creation and share what wonders touch your heart(s) with God and one another. Recalling the parable of the talents from our first week's study (Matt 25), and the fact that God created us in His image, consider/discuss what gifts the Church and we as individuals have; how do we use them for God and others? Do we use our gifts mainly for our benefit?

(For further study if time allows - read Romans 8: 18-25; how does sin, salvation & redemption impact upon all creation?).

## **God Saves**

Read Ephesians. God saves us from death (spiritual), slavery (to sin, Satan and the world) and condemnation (1-3). How deeply do we understand each of these aspects and therefore God's saving grace? Grace, faith and works; what balance is God seeking in our lives? What does it mean to be made alive in Christ (5)?

## **God Provides**

Psalm 23 displays the wonder of God's provision: restoration; renewal; guidance; protection; love; and eternal life. The Psalm describes our relationship with God the Father. What aspects of His provision do you/we need most at the moment? Meditate on how He provides; praise and pray. If God provides in this way how should we receive?

## **Some Implications for us**

- There is real purpose in salvation: a relationship with God (Ps 23); the demonstration of Christ's riches (Eph 2: 7); and good works (Eph 2: 10). Where do we stand in relation to each of these purposes as a Church and as individuals?
- The Gospel passage in Luke shows God the Father patiently waiting for the prodigal son to come to his senses (17) and then bestowing blessing upon Him on his return. Earlier in the chapter we see God as the shepherd going out to seek the lost. Again as a Church and as individuals how should we mirror His 'being & doing' in this way? What implications are there for us as a Church in today's culture – what areas do we hold on to while 'waiting' for prodigal children (how would we receive them) and how should we go out? Remember the Phone box analogy (*from the Rev Nadia Bolz-Weber*)!

God is doing something new (Is 43:19) yet is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8). How might a **Real Church** mirror this **Real God** in our **Real Lives**?

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