

Connect Group Notes Sunday 8th July

As always - use these notes to help not to dictate!

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. - and you can read this in (Romans 6:3)

Baptism is an outward sign of a complete change in our status - the Bible uses many images. How many can you think of? (eg from death to life, from darkness to light, from lost to found, from slave to free, from orphan to son/heir) Can you think of scripture references that justify these?

think about these images - are there any that you particularly relate to? Our old life is dead and we are now alive in Christ. Can you testify to specific things that you know you have left behind? Are there things from your old life that you are still carrying? Why don't you pray for people that are still carrying these things - and use some of the scriptures you have found in your prayers - Remember - pray together - pray specific prayers - remind God and yourselves of who he is and what his promises are to you

If you had to summarise the Good News that we have to share in just a few sentences what would you include? Think about writing out a short paragraph that you could share if the occasion arose

You have heard of heaven being described as 'pie in the sky when you die' and of people being described as 'too heavenly minded to be of any earthly use'. Do you think there is any truth in these comments? (personally I think that unless we have a robust view of 'heaven' we will be of no earthly use!) Do you think it is good to think about what will happen to us after death? How might a good understanding of what God has in store for us shape how we live now? Can you think of any scriptures to argue your case?

Read 1 Corinthians 15 from verse 12 to the end (quite long but very good) - what is there here that you find encouraging?

Is there anyone in your group who has not been baptised? If they are a Christian what is holding them back? We will have another baptismal service soon - encourage them to get baptised. As Nathan said - it is symbolic - but it is more than *just* symbolic. Jesus commanded us to be baptised and it is surely not insignificant that it was as Jesus was baptised that the Holy Spirit came on him.