



christ church
moreton

*Just
One
Thing*

Christ Church Small Groups
Spring 2022



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2022

Let us **hold unswervingly**
to the **hope** we profess,
for **he who promised is faithful.**

And let us consider how we may
spur one another on
towards love and good deeds.

Hebrews 10:23-24

The start of a New Year is often a time when people look at their lives, and plan to make changes. But those New Year Resolutions rarely last, and the change we want rarely happens. And the same can be true in our lives as disciples of the Lord Jesus. We look at ourselves, we see things that need to change, but all too often we don't really know how to bring those changes about.

That isn't a reason for abandoning the desire to grow as disciples. God has given us things which can help – things which we will be thinking about in both our services on Sunday and in these home-groups. The questions in these notes will hopefully help you to engage with what has been said on Sundays, but don't feel limited

by them – this is a chance to pick up on things from Sunday which you want to talk about.

We've called the series 'Just One Thing', because if you only pick one of these things to put into practice, it will help you grow. But, of course, the more of them you do take on board, the more that growth will happen.

But although there are things that we can do, fundamentally our life as disciples is rooted in what God has already done for us and continues to do for us. So before thinking about what we do, we spend the first 2 sessions remembering what God has done.

The diary for this term looks like this:

w/b Mon 10th January – Home-group 1 – The grace of Christ

w/b Mon 17th January – free week

w/b Mon 24th January – Home-group 2 – The love of God

& the fellowship of the Holy Spirit

Wed 2nd February – **Prayer Meeting**

w/b Mon 7th February – Home-group 3 – Prayer & Bible reading

w/b Mon 14th February – free week

w/b Mon 21st February – Home group 4 – Worship & Baptism

Wed 2nd March – **Prayer Meeting**

w/b Mon 7th March – Home-group 5 – Communion & Service

w/b Mon 14th March – free week

w/b Mon 21st March – Home-group 6 – Giving & Confession

w/b Mon 28th March – free week

Wed 6th April – **Prayer Meeting**

1. A New Year

Did you make any New Year Resolutions? If so, were they ambitious or mundane? Our theme verses for 2022 give us 2 great things to aim for this year. The first is to do with our relationship with the Lord – holding to it and growing in it. The second is to do with our relationships with one another – encouraging each other to grow not just in our faith but in putting it into practice in love and good deeds.

Read Hebrews 10:23-25

Our theme verse for 2022 begins by encouraging us to *hold unswervingly to the hope we profess*. Hebrews 10:23.

- What is the hope you profess? How confident are you about the gospel? What difference has knowing Jesus made to you?
- Have you had experiences in the past which have tempted you to lose your confidence in the gospel?
- Are you facing pressures or influences at present that could water down your passion for Christ?

Our theme verse then goes on to talk about the vital importance of fellowship – we need to *spur one another on towards love and good deeds*. Hebrews 10:24

- Can you think of a time when another Christian has spurred you on to take up some new work for the Lord?

- How can you do this for one another in your group? What opportunities are there at the moment for you to take on something new?
- Why does it matter whether or not we spend time with each other as Christians?

Holding on to our hope, spurring one another on – great goals for the year. But not things we will ever do in our own strength. As Christians the whole of our lives are rooted not in what we do, but in what Jesus has done and continues to do for us.

Read 2 Corinthians 8:9

- How does what Paul says here help us to understand what grace is?

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Just before this, Paul had written about his ‘thorn in the flesh’ – something that was hindering him and being used by Satan to discourage him. He prayed that God would take it away, and verse 9 gives us God’s response.

- What did the Lord mean by saying that his grace was sufficient?
- In what areas of your Christian life are you tempted to rely on your own strength rather than the Lord’s?

- Does knowing that the whole of the Christian life is rooted in what Christ has done and continues to do for us, rather than on anything we do, encourage you or discourage you?

What are your goals for 2022 as a disciple of the Lord Jesus? Share them with each other, then pray for one another.

Next time we will start by sharing anything that has happened in answer to those prayers.

2. *God's love and fellowship*

Last time we ended with an encouragement to pray for one another. Have you been aware of answers to those prayers?

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Our lives are rooted in the grace shown us in the Lord Jesus, but also in the love of God and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. The whole Trinity is at work for your good – in fact, without that grace, love and fellowship the life of discipleship would be impossible.

Read Psalm 103:6-12

- How does this describe the ways in which God shows his love for us?

Read 1 John 4:7-12.

- How did God show His love to us?
- What do we have to do to earn God's love?

Read Ephesians 3:17-19.

- What does Paul pray for believers to be (v 17)?
- What does he want believers to grasp and know about God's love?

- Does this describe what you believe about God?

Read John 14:15-27

- What role does the Holy Spirit play in a Christian's life?
- Why can't the world recognise the Holy Spirit?
- It is sometimes said that we can't be sure whether the gospels are accurate. How does what Jesus says in v.26 help us to be confident about what we read in the New Testament?
- How does the fellowship of the Holy Spirit bring us a peace the world can't understand?

Read Galatians 5:13-26

This is a very well known passage which we have looked at before in home-groups.

- How does this show the difference that the Holy Spirit makes in the life of a Christian?
- How aware are you of becoming less like verses 19-21 and more like verses 22-23 in your own life?

In Ephesians 3 we saw that Paul prayed for his readers to know more of God's love. Can you pray that for one another in the coming 2 weeks?

3. Prayer & The Bible

Start today by sharing any ways in which you have become more aware of God's love since the last study.

Having remembered the ways in which God is at work for us, we now look at the things we can do to help us grow as disciples. First are 2 things that I guess every Christians would say are important – prayer and reading the Bible. When you first became a Christian, most likely they were 2 things you were told you needed to do. But sometimes there can be a disconnect between what we say is important, and what actually is important in our lives.

Read Philippians 4:4-9

- What experiences in your life have brought you greatest joy?
- Does knowing that you belong to Jesus make you feel like rejoicing?
- What things do you get anxious about?
- Does what Paul says here just mean that prayer is a sort of therapy which can help you feel better?
- We might see why presenting our requests to God is important, but why does Paul say this should include thanksgiving?

Read Matthew 6:9-13

These are such well known words that it is easy to say them without thinking too much about what they mean.

- How does each clause in the prayer relate to us growing as Christians?

Read Isaiah 55:8-13

- How does what is said in verses 8-9 make the Bible important to Christians?
- How do verses 10-11 speak about the way that God's word works in our lives?
- What is the relationship between God's word being at work and our joy?

Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17

- This passage lists several ways in which God's word is important. What are they (v.15, 16, 17)?
- How have you been aware of any of these in your own life?

The next time your group meet, come ready to share some way in which God has spoken to you through the Bible.

4. *Worship & Baptism*

Following up on our last session –have you anything to share from your reading of the Bible?

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'Worship is one of those words which all Christians use, but which is sometimes difficult to pin down. In the New Testament the word is most often used to talk about the way we live the whole of our lives – in Romans 12 Paul writes that we should *offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.* Romans 12:1.

There is a more restricted use of the word, applying to what we do when we come together as God's people to worship him. That is the main thrust of what we are thinking about here, but that corporate worship cannot be divorced from our 24/7 lives as disciples.

Read Colossians 3:12-17

- What should we be clothing ourselves with?
- How do we go about doing that?
- Which do you find the hardest to put on?
- What does it mean to let the message of Christ dwell in you richly?
- According to Paul, what is the main reason for singing psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit?

In the last 3 verses of this passage, Paul refers to thankfulness / gratitude 3 times. He says that whatever we do, whether in word or deed, we should do it all in Christ's name, giving thanks to God.

- How do we do everything in Christ's name?

If 'worship' is a word that is used in different ways, baptism is a subject which is applied differently in different churches. There has been disagreement among Bible-believing Christians about baptism since the second or third centuries. Some churches baptise only adults, some adults and infants, and some don't baptise at all. There will probably be a range of views in your group. But what is it all about, and does it matter?

Read Acts 2:37-39

This comes after Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost.

- What is the relationship between repentance and baptism?
- Can baptism without repentance save you?
- Can repentance without baptism save you?

Read Romans 6:1-10

- What does Paul say that baptism symbolises?
- And what difference does he say that baptism makes?
- How should your baptism affect the way you live your life today?

In the first part of this study, we saw that we should do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. What can you do to remind yourselves to put this into practice in the coming 2 weeks? What situations will you face where doing this will be a challenge? Pray about these with one another.

Next time we will start by sharing any experiences of consciously doing things in the name of Christ and giving thanks to the Father.

5. Communion & Service

How have you found trying to consciously do everything in the name of Christ over the past 2 weeks?

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Last time we thought about the importance of worship – especially of our times of worship together in church. Now we think about one element of that worship – Holy Communion.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-32

For the early Christians, communion was shared in the context of a meal rather than in a church service. Certainly it was never meant to be something individualistic.

- How does what Paul writes show the link between relationships in the fellowship and our relationship with the Lord?
- What does Paul mean when he says that in taking the bread and wine we *proclaim the Lord's death*?

We should examine ourselves before receiving communion (v.28).

- Does this mean that we should only take communion if we have done nothing wrong?
- Have you ever taken communion whilst being aware of having fallen out with someone else in church?

- How can we make sure that having communion builds us up rather than condemning us?

Communion is focussed on what God has done for us in Jesus. At first sight, service seems to be about what we do for God. But although in one sense that is true, in another sense it is something God gives to us to help us grow.

Read Ephesians 2:8-10

- When someone becomes a Christian, what part do they play? And what part does God play?
- When we do good works, what part do we play? And what part does God play?

Serving in an integral part of discipleship – it is one of the ways in which God not only uses us to bless others, but also in which God builds us up.

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

- What is the relationship between love and service?
- What is the ultimate aim of our serving one another (v.11)

Our theme verse for 2022 tells us that we should *spur one another on towards love and good deeds*. How can you spur one another on to serve others in Christ Church and in the wider community? As well as praying about that now, you might need to spend some time thinking about it before you next meet.

6. Giving & Confession

Have you thought on any ways in which you can encourage and help one another to be active in service?

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I suspect that when we think about giving, it is usually in the context of an unfortunate necessity – as members of Christ Church we need to give in order to fund the mission of our church. But the New Testament emphasis seems to be that giving is important for its own sake.

Read Matthew 19:16-26

It is a well know story – recorded in Matthew, Mark & Luke’s gospels.

- Do you think that Jesus’ instruction to the rich man applies to us as well?
- Why do you think the man found it impossible to give away his wealth?
- Why is it so hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God?
- When it comes to the crunch, what would you find it easier to rely on for your security – money, or God?

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-14

- What do you think Paul means in verse 6?
- Is it realistic to think that our giving can be both sacrificial and cheerful?
- What is the connection between having all that you need, and abounding in every good work (v.8)?
- And what is the connection between giving and a harvest of righteousness (v.10)?

Read 1 Peter 2:24-25

Jesus bore all our sins on the cross. Through faith in him, all my sins, known and unknown, past present and future, have been dealt with. That’s why, in Romans 8:1, Paul can say that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.

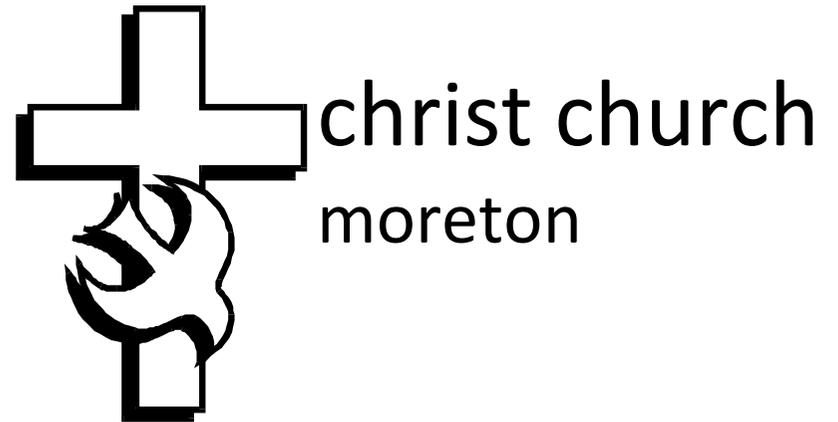
- So – if our sins have already been forgiven, does confession make any sense?

Read Psalm 32

- How does David describe the effect of sin?
- What is the relationship between repentance, confession and forgiveness?
- What might make us reluctant to confess?

- Have there ever been things you have been doing which you knew were wrong, but that you were unwilling to stop doing?

As we end this series, what one thing has helped you in your discipleship?



making disciples
growing disciples
being disciples