

House Group Notes

2nd May 2017



Ichthus Values, Characteristics & Distinctives Session 10: Theology Part 2 of 3 - Christocentric

Introduction

As part of our series looking at Ichthus' values, characteristics and distinctives last time we started to look at the foundations of Ichthus' "theology" which are radical, Christocentric and eschatological.

Based on last week, briefly summarise what "Radical" means and why it is important

Today we will continue to look at Ichthus' theological values, which form this group of three comprising Radical, Christocentric & Eschatological, by focusing on "Christocentric", which is a bit of a made up Christian word. Before we define it and look at it in detail we will re-read the statement about Ichthus' theological values taken from our website.

Read the statement below taken from Ichthus' website:

THEOLOGY: RADICAL, CHRISTOCENTRIC, ESCHATOLOGICAL.

We seek to make known the reasons behind what we do and experience in our lives in Christ. This is our theology or study of God. It is 'radical' in that it continuously resorts to our 'roots' in the Bible and the early church. Equally it is 'Christocentric' in that we look for Jesus in all of the Bible and in our experience of the Spirit of God (John 5:39-40; Luke 24:26-47). When we say our theology is 'Eschatological' we mean that while Jesus has brought in the Kingdom of God it is not yet manifest or operating in its fullness. This is why we pray 'Your Kingdom come'. When Jesus returns we will see and experience the fullness of the kingdom of God which at present we see only in part.

Christocentric is defined by an online dictionary as:

"Having Christ as its centre"

Discussion Questions:

- Where do you think this idea of having Christ/Jesus at our centre comes from?
- Why do you think it is important to have Christ/Jesus as our centre?
- What do you think it means practically to have Christ/Jesus at our centre?

Read John 14:7-14 and Colossians 1:15-20

Jesus says here in John that "He who has seen me has seen the Father" and "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me". Paul says in Colossians "He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God". Both Paul and Jesus are saying that Jesus is the fullness of God, God seen and made known to humanity. When we look at Jesus, what he did, what he said, how he treated people, we see God himself doing it. So, if we want to get to know what God is like, then we can find out through Jesus.

Read Luke 24:26-47 and John 5:39-40 and discuss:

- What did Jesus say about the scriptures and the Old Testament?
- What does he mean by this?
- What does this mean for us today?

So, if Jesus is God, and if we want to know what God is like we should get to know Him through Jesus, and if Jesus sums up the scriptures and can be found throughout scriptures as they point to him, then Jesus is at the centre of the bible; who God is and God's rescue plan for humanity. So, let's look together now at a great example of how we can find Jesus and God's rescue plan throughout the bible.

Read Genesis 22:1-19

Now, before we look at what we can see of Jesus and God's rescue plan in this passage, we just need to cover a few key points. It is understandably shocking that God is asking Abraham to kill his son, but it is important to remember that God never intended Abraham to kill Isaac, as it was a test. Also, it was not uncommon for religions in this region 3,800 years ago to require the atrocious act of child sacrifice to their god's, and Abraham would have been aware of this. Also, Abraham clearly had faith/trust in God's character to provide the offering (verse 8) and that it would be ok in the end, and we can see that he was right to do so!!

Discuss – You may need to gradually tease out the answer and give clues:

- Where do you think you can see Jesus and God's rescue plan in this passage?
 - Abraham was willing to give his "only son" to God – God the Father gave Jesus, His "only son" (John 3:16) to die for us.
 - The Lord said "He would provide the offering"
 - A ram caught in the bushes – Jesus is known as the lamb of God.
 - It may be a coincidence, but the phrase "on the third day Abraham raised his eyes" reminded me of Jesus raised from the tomb after three days.
 - Jesus is a descendant of Abraham and the "seed" that blesses every nation.
 - Any thing else?

Suggested Prayer Points:

- For a greater revelation of the person of Jesus and therefore God's character.
- The Spirit's help to see Jesus throughout the bible as we read it.