

## Session Five:

### 1. Additional Biblical or Prayer Book material

In Week Three of the “Going Further” section we examined some of God’s calls on people’s lives. The call of God on their life life changed them. We looked at how Paul was persecuting Christians and became a proclaimer of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The fishermen who were called certainly had a change in their life style. Some were unwilling starters like Jeremiah while others respond like Isaiah who said. “Here am I send me”.

Jesus used many parables to teach us. Most parables touch on one or more aspects of life. Jesus then highlights what we need to take on board. Another way of expressing this is that we don’t just know about it, the message is written in our hearts.

Let us look at the various “Sower and the Seed” passages.

Matthew 13:1-9 & Matthew 13:18-23

Mark 4:1-9 & Mark 4:13-20

Luke 8:4-8 & 8:11-15

Each of these passages concludes with words, “Let everyone with ears, listen”. It is important that we listen to those who are speaking to us, it is important to listen to God. Christians are people who listen to God.

The Parable also concludes with “some hundredfold, some sixtyfold and some thirtyfold”. A thirtyfold is a harvest may not be the harvest we would like, but it is still a harvest. So often it is easy just give thanks for the 100 but not the 30. We need to give thanks for all the harvests. Thankfulness comes from the heart. It is knowing your blessings. It is part of our being, because the covenant of God is written in our hearts and on our lips.

John 12:24, “Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies it bears much fruit”.

As Christians we are to die to sin, or die to self so that we can live according to the way of God - with the new covenant written on our hearts. There are many passages about dying to sin, but I offer these few for your reflection and consideration.

Romans 6:1-13

Galatians 2:30 & 5:24

Mark 8:35

John 12:24

Philippians 2:1-30

1 Peter 4:1-11

### 2. A section on how the Church can make a difference

Recently I lead a retreat for clergy and lay leaders. In one of my addresses I made the point that the longest journey some people will make in their life is thirteen inches or 34 centimetres; the distance from the head to the heart. It is moving from “knowing about” to “knowing”; there is a difference. As Christians we are called to know Christ, to follow Christ, to grow in Christ so that we are Christ in the world. It is when we are Christ in the world that we can make a difference.

Lent is a time for all of us to reflect on this reality.

In the study booklet, I make reference to the grain of wheat. The grain of wheat has to die to produce more seeds. It can be painful, but in dying and rising in faith we open ourselves for God to work his will in us, so that we can make a difference in the lives of other people.

### **3. and prompts for “have you considered”**

How you considered how you serve the Lord? John 12:26 states “Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am there will my servant be also”. Have you deeply considered how to follow Jesus and what it means to be a servant of Jesus.

Have you considered the nature of Christian leadership. The world out there will tell you that there are all sorts of leadership - autocratic, bureaucratic, charismatic, transactional, transformative, commanding visionary and the list can go on. However, contrary to how the world sees leadership, have you considered the model of Jesus Christ, that of servant leadership.

Reflect on John 13:1-20 and consider what it says to you personally and as a member of a community of faith.