

HOUSEGROUP NOTES: Week Beginning 16th October 2016

'AN INVITATION TO COME CLEAN'

Read: (Acts 5:1-11)

TO START WITH:

Have each person in the group write down 3 statements about themselves: Two true statements and one lie. For example I might write, "*I have never broken a bone. I have 2 brothers. I was born in Southport.*"

Having done this each person in turn then reads them out and the rest of the group tries to guess which statement is the lie.

Each one having COME CLEAN about which lie was told (I have broken a bone) DISCUSS

Q. HOW honest should we be about our own personal struggles with others?

Q. IS it being hypocritical if we don't share all our struggles with everyone and if not then WHAT guidelines might apply here?

Q. HOW can we cultivate genuine humility and thus avoid hypocrisy?

A hypocrite was literally an actor who used a mask to portray a particular character.

Q. HOW would you respond to the unbeliever who charges, "*The church is full of hypocrites*"?

TOTEASE OUT:

Q. WHAT was the problem that Ananias and Sapphira had? WHY were they trying to appear more generous than they were? HINT (Acts 4:32-37)

Q. ARE religious people particularly vulnerable to putting on an appearance? If so WHY?

Q. WHAT was the source of their hypocritical sin? (Vs.3)

Q. WHY is hypocrisy such a deadly sin? (Vs.4)

Q. HOW can we detect it and fight it in ourselves?

Q. HOW did Peter know this couple had held some money back? CONSIDER (1 Corinthians 12:8)

DISCUSS (Proverbs 15:8) in the context of this incident.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT:

The spirit of Ananias and Sapphira is alive in the church today **WHENEVER** there is the desire to be considered 'spiritual' **WITHOUT** the willingness to pay the full price of Christ-like discipleship.

Q. WHY do you think the punishment for their sin was so seemingly so harsh (Vs.11) and WHY don't we see God judge the same way now?

Q. WHY (Vs.8) in given the chance to **COME CLEAN** did Sapphira choose not to and what can we learn from this?

TO PLACE ALONGSIDE:

Read (Matthew 7.1-5)

Q. WHY is Jesus so strong on the issue of not judging, and WHY is it then that Christians are often perceived as being particularly judgemental?

Q. In regard to "*Planks and specks*" DO we tend to categorise our own sins as minor and excusable, and those of others as major?

Q. In **WHAT** areas has this been particularly true of the church, and **HOW** can we get a more Christ-like perspective on sin?

TO ACT ON:

COME CLEAN before God about the inconsistencies in our own life.

PRAY that God would keep us from hypocritical behaviours and attitudes, and that we would know and demonstrate the grace and mercy of Jesus himself.

LOOK for ways to be more generous with what we have been entrusted with.

WRITE a letter of encouragement to someone, it may make all the difference.

Shaun