**Life Group Notes 17 September**

**Understanding the Old Testament : what Jesus taught**

* Read from the Sermon on the Mount *(Matthew 5 : 17 – 20)*
* How do you respond to Richard Dawkins’ scathing comments about the Old Testament describing God “…arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction..”?
* How do members of the group view the description of J C Ryle (first Anglican Bishop of Liverpool) that the Old Testament is the gospel in bud and the New Testament is the gospel in full flower?
* What do you value about the Old Testament and why?
* What does it mean in practice to understand the Old Testament in the light of Jesus coming into the world?

**Jesus teaches about the Law and Prophets *(Matthew 5 17 – 18)***

* The Hebrew word “Torah” (law) means guidance or instruction. Share any helpful guidance or instruction you find in the Old Testament
* Read *Isaiah 9 : 6 – 7 and 53 : 5 – 6* and share thoughts of the lamb/sheep theme in the Old Testament and New Testament
* What other major biblical themes link Old and New Testaments?

**Jesus teaches about obedience *(Matthew 5 : 19)***

* “Our choice is between worldly fashion and the Lord’s will”? *(John Stott)*
* In what areas of life do we find it most challenging to be obedient to God?

**Jesus teaches about the importance of righteousness (*Matthew 5 : 20)***

* Christian righteousness is inward / heart and mind impacting the whole of life. How would you describe righteous living rooted in the teaching of scripture?
* Righteousness is a work of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Share examples of righteous living that may have inspired you
* Read Jeremiah 3 : 33 and Ezekiel 36 : 26 – 27
* In what ways should this teaching make a difference to us?
* You are invited to use this prayer by John Stott :

“We pray that your written word and scripture may now and always be our rule, your Holy Spirit our teacher and your greater glory our supreme concern, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**”

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