

Home Group Notes W/c 25th June 2017

Holy Habits

Eating Together (part 2)



Please use the Holy Habits material for the session on 'Eating Together', but I wanted to give the opportunity to try something around eating in the way the early Church did.

The preparation

Plan to meet together and to share food around a table. Make the food simple and something everyone can join in with (in both the eating and the preparing). It doesn't matter if it is 'bring and share' or one person makes a casserole - the eating is more important than the menu. For drinking, again simple is best. There is little evidence that the early Church met and drank wine on every occasion - water or fruit juice is perfectly proper for this.

Perhaps some of the parts of the meal might have a special significance - they might contain yeast or salt, for example, which would point towards a snippet of teaching that Jesus gave (Matthew 5:13-16, for example).

In the time when you meet to plan the meal (perhaps at the end of another group meeting) then read together 1 Corinthians 14:26-31.

26 This is what I mean, my friends. When you meet for worship, one person has a hymn, another a teaching, another a revelation from God, another a message in strange tongues, and still another the explanation of what is said. Everything must be of help to the church. 27 If someone is going to speak in strange tongues, two or three at the most should speak, one after the other, and someone else must explain what is being said. 28 But if no one is there who can explain, then the one who speaks in strange tongues must be quiet and speak only to himself and to God. 29 Two or three who are given God's message should speak, while the others are to judge what they say. 30 But if someone sitting in the meeting receives a message from God, the one who is speaking should stop. 31 All of you may proclaim God's message, one by one, so that everyone will learn and be encouraged.

Allow some time for people to think about this. What would each one of you bring from that list? It might be worth spending a few moments to consider whether people are comfortable with the various ingredients in this list. Make sure you read through the rest of this sheet together so people can visualise what is going to happen to help them prepare themselves.

In the days before the meal people need to be thinking about praying about what they are bringing to the worship.

The meal

Gather as agreed. Get the food ready and the table laid and then pause.

I read the 1 Corinthians passage that the person or people acting as 'host' in this meal aren't there to 'lead', but to encourage involvement and make sure each person is heard. If someone speaks in tongues or share a picture then pause to allow everyone to 'digest' it and see if anyone else feels prompted to respond to it. This is a conversation, after all.

Don't say grace and then eat, as we might normally do. Allow the eating to intermingle with prayers and conversation about Jesus. There could be texts in the Psalms that are useful, for example Psalm 145:13-21 speaks of God supplying needs, so that section could be used as a prayer of blessing and praise. Psalm 104 praises God as creator and mentions cattle and crops. Psalm 136 was traditionally used at the Passover, so one person could prepare extracts from this Psalm to read. It might be that for some it is telling their favourite story about Jesus and saying why.

Enjoy the meal together. Enjoy talking and sharing. Enjoy remembering Jesus.

The verses in Acts 2:43-47 suggest that this way of being Church brought about growth. How could you do something like this again, but invite others?

Let me know how you got on!