

Sometimes it's good to admit we don't know...

Readings: Colossians 2:6 -7

Isaiah 61:1 -3

Surely our faith is based on a good news message of hope – isn't that what brought us all to the Lord to start with? Isn't that what attracted us to Him? But then as we go deeper into faith we find it's not that simple, what about all the difficult questions and the things that make us feel uncomfortable or confused? What about the tough times, either for us or for those around us?

- How easy do you find it to consider difficult questions and uncomfortable issues, and admit you don't have an answer?

Life can be a challenge. We have peace in one area of our life but there's always something that throws us a curve ball. Then we cling to the Good News, the hope we have in Jesus, to get us through.

- How willing are you to face the challenge of that curve ball, and how willing are you to admit if you don't or can't understand?

But, is it good for us if we don't admit these things, at least to ourselves? How does this impact the growth of our faith? And what effect does that have on those around us – family and friends, and the people we just meet as we go about daily life?

- Spend a few minutes discussing the questions raised in the paragraph above.

Life isn't nice, neat and easy, so surely our faith life isn't going to be either. But if we refuse to ask the difficult questions, or don't admit when we're challenged, then how do we grow? We just stay exactly where we are.

This must look pretty unconvincing to all those around us if we're clinging to a reality that is clearly very different to the one they are seeing. Then we wonder why our faith is incomprehensible to them, or is dismissed as a fairy tale or a crutch that helps us cope.

Surely, we should be asking those difficult questions and testing the things we learn. And if we can't find an answer that's okay; we need to accept that it's alright not to know. It means we're real people. It makes us more not less.

- Spend a few minutes discussing your thoughts about this.

Once we start asking the really challenging questions, we don't know what we might find. So, we need to be prepared in case the answers have a profound or disturbing impact on us. It's important to make sure we're well anchored in our faith. We need to have our roots

planted deeply in Jesus. That doesn't just happen, we need to make a choice and actively pursue Him.

- How can we do this?

In Colossians 2:7 Jesus invites us in. Not only is He offering stability and growth, but sustenance and refreshment, protection, rescue, help, love, and He gives us worth.

Isaiah 61:1-3 gives us a most beautiful picture of this. Whatever our circumstances and situation, Jesus can make us whole and beautiful, He sets us solid as great oak trees. And through this we can reflect His glory, so that others will see Him through us.

- Spend a few minutes thanking the Lord for His love for you and His sacrifice, do this either with your small group or in silent prayer.

When Jesus invites us to plant our roots deep in Him, it's like an oasis for our spirits. As we grow and open ourselves to Him, so much more becomes clear and there's so much more He can show us and so much more we'll be able to learn – big and little epiphanies, revelation and enlightenment, and fresh understanding that goes way beyond what we thought possible.

- Spend a few minutes in quiet contemplation, ask the Lord to draw you close to Him and claim His love and power over your life, then thank Him.

As we become more deeply rooted in Jesus we'll become more teachable, and so be better disciples, and better able to disciple others. We'll be hungry for more; hungry to see more people coming to know Jesus, and Hungry for more of Him in our own lives. And His glory will be seen in us.

We still won't have all of the answers, but we'll be in a much better position to ask the questions.

- (If you would like to do this.) Ask the Lord to help strengthen your faith so you will be able to become more deeply rooted in Him.
- Please continue to pray for each other, for Paul and for the elders.