

**DARE TO BE A DISCIPLE** – Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2016

**8: REPRODUCTION** – Jesus expects disciples to be reproduced



The theme this week is **REPRODUCTION** of disciples. We are called to be disciples but also to disciple others.

Alan introduced the theme, highlighting the fresh challenges that we face today in what is often termed our post-Christendom society. This is where Christianity no longer shapes our culture as it once did. It was illustrated recently by **Archbishop Welby** who said: 'Christians are sometimes dismissed by government workers as a 'bit bonkers.' Some officials have no grip on how faith shapes the way believers live and cannot distinguish between traditionalist Anglicans and Muslim extremists.'

- How do you see this shift from Christendom to post-Christendom in our society?
- Do you think that it is a good thing for the church and Christianity to be less dominant in our culture?

Certainly one of the challenges is that the church can no longer depend on saying to the community 'come to us' but we have to 'go to them' and make a difference.

The call of Jesus is to bear fruit (Jn 15.16) '**I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit.**'

- Do you know the reality of the fact that you are chosen and appointed by Jesus for this work?

### **1. REPRODUCTION – The first great commission.**

In **Genesis 1.28** – we have the call to be fruitful and multiply in number. It is followed up after sin entered the world with the call to Noah, *to be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.* (Gen 9.1)

The application is that we are called to spiritual multiplication...**to be fruitful and increase.**

### **2. REPRODUCTION – The second great commission..**

Matthew 28.19-20 is the continuing call to be *fruitful and multiply* as Jesus calls us to **go and make disciples.**

- What are some of the challenges about 'going?'
- 'As the Father has sent me, so I send you' (Jn 20.21). We are a sent people.
- How do we deal with the fact that sometimes we do not feel that we are a sent people, or simply don't want the responsibility?
- 'Go' 'baptising' 'teaching' are all linked to the responsibility of making disciples and discipling.

Only God by the power of his Spirit can equip us. The Early Church in **Acts 8.4** were scattered because of persecution and it is said that '*they preached the word wherever they went.*' No wonder a revival took place in Samaria. Read the story and capture the excitement of revival.

### **3. REPRODUCTION – An integral part of our calling.**

Take the calling of the disciples, many of whom were fishermen. There is the fishing image (Matt 4.19; Lk 5.10) that Jesus uses when he says **follow me and I will make you fishers of men.**

- What are some of the 'fishing lessons' that we need to learn for our calling to be effective?
- What kind of tools do we need for fishing?

The confidence in the gospel 'bait' is brought out by Paul in Romans 1.16.

### **4. REPRODUCTION – backed up by the teaching of Jesus.**

In **Matthew 5.13-16** There is the challenge of being SALT & LIGHT.

In **John 15. 5, 8** There is the challenge of being fruitful vine, bearing fruit that will last.

In **Matt13.32** There is the challenge of the smallest mustard seed growing into a large tree.

**Jesus calls us to be productive – and through it we will live satisfied and fulfilled lives to the glory of God.**