

# St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups 6th September 2009

## Kingdom, Power and Glory – power for change Romans 8:1-17



### Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon

The climax to the most amazing prayer the world has ever known is '**For yours is the Kingdom, the power and the Glory!**' In teaching his disciples how to pray Jesus set a prophetic manifesto that envisaged God's kingdom coming in power and glory. Every time we pray the Lord's Prayer we echo that vision but I wonder how many of us have really grasped the fact that we ourselves are integral to seeing this vision become a reality!

Back in June some of us here at St Paul's were at the ordination service at Guildford Cathedral to witness Fiona Simon being ordained as a deacon. It was a moving and powerful service and I was particularly struck by the number of references in the liturgy and worship made to the glory of God being seen through us. Can the glory of the creator of the universe really been seen in our lives? The answer has to be yes! Empowered by the Spirit of God it is the lives of his children that will reflect the Father's Glory and see his Kingdom come. Yet the reality is that we often feel weak and helpless in our life of faith, far from being an agent of God's kingdom, and anything but glorious!

This term our preaching and teaching follows on from all that God has been doing amongst us in the renewal of our vision as a church by bringing each of us afresh to the personal challenge of what it means to be filled with his Spirit. During the next few months we will get back to the basics of what it means to live a Spirit filled life and confront some of the hard questions that we have about the Holy Spirit's work. There will be opportunity for each of us to receive prayer and ministry and to move from where we may be stuck!

Our passage today is one of the great chapters in the Bible outlining the way the Holy Spirit operates in enabling us to live a life of faith. The key word in Romans 8 is **Spirit** which occurs 21 times, more than in any other chapter in the NT. Paul uses this to emphasise the new and wonderful life that opens out before those who put their trust in Christ and that this depends on the work of the Holy Spirit.

Focusing on v 9 -17 in particular we see evidence of the presence, power and promise of the Spirit.

**Presence:** read v 9-10 It is the presence of the Spirit that makes all the difference. Without the Holy Spirit it is as if we are spiritually dead, it is the presence of the Holy Spirit who brings life that lasts – read v11. When we accept that Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life we acknowledge our need of his presence in our lives day by day and it is through the presence of the Holy Spirit that this is experienced as we are guided, led and empowered.

**Power:** The Spirit of God is not a supporter standing on the sidelines offering encouragement and advice from the terraces, cheering us on as we play the game of life! God's Spirit is with us and is active amongst us, helping us and changing us - transforming us from the inside out. He is the power that creates new life in us - "If Christ lives in you, the Spirit is life for you because you" v11 Good News Bible. Our lives can be transformed if we say yes to the Spirit. He is the power that can do a new work in us and through us.

**Promise:** read v14 -16 We are God's children and He is our Father. The gift of the Spirit is the assurance of the Fatherhood of God. Our Heavenly Father will not give up on us, He won't let us down, He will stick by us through thick and thin. Our Heavenly Father has an inheritance for us now and in a future to come that stretches beyond this life. The promise of the Holy Spirit in our lives is God's sign, his seal that we are wanted. We are loved, we are safe.

Are we looking for change, for transformation not just temporary, on the surface, on the outside but deeper, lasting and from the inside out; the reality of the presence of the Spirit afresh in our lives: a sense of God's empowering and purpose: a sense of fulfilling our calling our ultimate destiny. God's kingdom **is coming** and **has come** and each of us has a unique part to play in his plans and purposes. Filled and empowered with his Spirit may his glory be seen in each one of us.



### Witness: questions to discuss

**Guidance:** Before discussion read the Bible passage, ask God to help you discern what the Spirit wants to say to your group. Consider one or two questions below – don't feel you have to use them all but do consider the key question! Make sure there's plenty of room for prayer and ministry.

1. Can the glory of the Creator of the universe really been seen in our lives?
2. Empowered by the Spirit of God it is the lives of his children that will reflect the Father's Glory and see his Kingdom come. Yet the reality is that we often feel weak and helpless in our life of faith, far from being an agent of God's kingdom, and anything but glorious!?
3. What do you think it means when someone talks about leading a 'Spirit filled' life?
4. What evidence is there in your life of the presence of the Spirit? The power of the Spirit?

**Key question:** *I am not sure I really want to change! I am so used to relying on myself rather than the Holy Spirit How do I actually do this?*

