

# **St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups.**

**July 25 2010**

**Focus: Creature Comforts Theme: The Snake**



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

**Read Genesis 3**

**As we leave the book of Revelation, remember this quote from Mark Twain " Most people are bothered by the parts of scripture that they cannot understand. I have always noticed that the passages in scripture that trouble me most are those which I do understand."**

**Over the summer we'll be exploring some of the big themes God has for us today using animal imagery.**

**THE SNAKE: to be a snake in the grass, venomous, to be a snake in the grass are all terms of abuse,**

**In Near Eastern religions and traditions the snake represents danger, magic, secrecy and sexuality.**

**The snake in Genesis is crafty and subtle, bent on mischief**

**Look at Genesis 2 : 16-17**

**God's command not to eat of one particular tree established a standard, put boundaries on what Adam could and could not do.**

The snake attacks God's standard in three ways

1. He questions the very existence of the standard (verse 1)
2. He casts doubts on God's motive for establishing a standard ( verse 5)
3. He denied the consequences of disobeying (verse 4)

Our only protection against evil is the belief which Eve abandoned

1. We need to affirm what God has said
2. We must be convinced that God's standards are not intended to deny us pleasures but to protect us from harm
3. We must realize that tragic consequences will follow violating God's standards of right and wrong.

The Biblical idea of temptation is not primarily of seduction but of trial, of putting a person to the test with the purpose of improving his quality of life rather than trapping him into wrong actions.

Read James 1;1 James never suggests to his readers that the Christian life will be an easy path.

Word translated temptation is PERIASMOS, meaning trial or testing but periasmos goes further as it means testing directed towards an end and that end is that we should emerge stronger and purer from the testing." The Christian must expect to be jostled by trials on his journey of faith"

Christians are like athletes and need to undergo heavier and heavier training to equip them for the tasks ahead

TEMPTATION is not a sin (Jesus was tempted many times) it only becomes sin when and as the suggestion of evil is accepted and yielded to.

Read 1 Corinthians 10 verse13. God will not allow you to be tested above what you are able to bear



## **Witness: Questions to discuss**

- 1 Do you agree that God has set us standards by which we should live?**
- 2. Discuss these standards, what they are, and what they may mean to us?**
- 3. Why does God set standards? why does he not just let us get on with it in our own way?**
- 4. Discuss the phrase “temptation is not a sin”**
- 5. Is there a difference between temptation and testing?**
- 6. Discuss the results of testing. Can you think of times you have been tested and what was the end result?**
- 7. Read 1 Corinthians 10 verse 13 and ponder on it.**