**Small Group Material - Romans 1 . 1 - 7**

**The Power of God - declared to be Jesus**

**Welcome**

Why is it so difficult keeping good news to ourselves?

Have you had any good news recently?

**Worship**

A great hymn written by John Newton, a notorious slave trader in the 18th century, that expresses the benefits of the gospel is ‘Amazing Grace’.

Read it out taking turns with verses. (Words below)

Reflect on the words. Turn the phrases into prayers.

Then stand up and sing it together.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jbe7OruLk8I

**Word**

*Paul begins his letter by saying who he is, v1, and who the letter is intended for, v7. But, he expands this classic formula by giving us more and more information on both counts.*

1. What does he tell us about who he is and who he’s writing to?

2. In v.2 - 5, *Paul gives a summary of the gospel for which he had been ‘set apart’.* What can we learn about the gospel from these verses? Look carefully at each phrase and dig into them. What do these verses tell us about Jesus?

*(Leader’s notes:* ***A.*** *v.3-5. Here Paul summarises the Good News about Jesus Christ.*

*a. Who came as a human - by natural descent*

*b. Who was part of the royal line through David*

*c. Who died and was raised from the dead*

*d. Who opened the door for God’s grace and kindness to be poured out upon us.*

*The book of Romans is an expansion of these themes.*

***B.*** *v.2. Some of the prophecies predicting the Good News of Jesus Christ are Gen 12.3, Ps 16.10, Ps 40.6-10, Ps 118.22, Is 11.1f, Zech 9.9-11, Mal 4.1-6. Why not get people to look them up - and express in their own words what the prophecy is saying and how they relate to the points above.)*

3. In v.5, Paul uses the term *‘the obedience that comes from faith’* (NIV). Tom Wright uses the phrase ‘believing obedience’. What does ‘believing obedience’ look like in a Christian’s life?

**Witness**

As it’s the first meeting of the New Year, go round the group with each person sharing something to praise God for and something for prayer. Keep it moving!

Pray for one other (how about: going clockwise round the group each person prays for the person on their left. That way everyone prays and each person is prayed for).

**"Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)"**

Amazing grace

How sweet the sound

That saved a wretch like me

I once was lost, but now I'm found

Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear

And grace my fears relieved

How precious did that grace appear

The hour I first believed

My chains are gone

I've been set free

My God, my Savior has ransomed me

And like a flood His mercy reigns

Unending love, amazing grace

The Lord has promised good to me

His word my hope secures

He will my shield and portion be

As long as life endures

[2x]

My chains are gone

I've been set free

My God, my Savior has ransomed me

And like a flood His mercy reigns

Unending love, amazing grace

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow

The sun forbear to shine

But God, Who called me here below,

Will be forever mine.

Will be forever mine.

You are forever mine.

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