

## Home group notes - w/b 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 – Getting ready

*Use as much or as little as you wish. Allow time for prayer even if you cut short some of the study. You don't have to use all of these notes, and it doesn't matter if you get diverted into something else the group needs to study.*

**1) Read Luke 1:5-7** Childlessness – one of several answered prayers in the Bible on this difficult area. What can you offer to help one another today? What hope, if any? (*Don't force this or spend longer on it than the group seems to feel appropriate*)

**Read Lk 1:6-18** Enter into the story as far as you can imagine it... in what ways do you sympathise with Zechariah? Is it wrong to ask God for signs of confirmation? Who are the angels who have spoken to you in times of need?

Notice verses 15-17. If we really want to be doing God's will, not just asking him to give us what we want, are we prepared to accept whatever he gives? *This was no easy calling for parents or the growing child. Nor, in 1 Samuel 1, was Hanna's answer an easy one...* Are we prepared to give our families over to him? Our plans?

**Read Lk 1:19-22** What do you make of the sign God does give? Why do you think it was necessary?

**Read Lk 1:57-66** How do you witness to others that the Lord has been good to you? God was doing something a bit dramatic here... memorable, noteworthy among friends and relatives. When was the last time you mentioned God to your friends and relatives? Was it in praise? How could you interpret events for them in terms of God's plan – even if they themselves are sceptical or unbelieving?

**See how many** references you can find to the Holy Spirit's activity in Luke 1:5-66. After a long gap – hundreds of years of waiting and warfare with no new revelation from God – now he seems to be very active. How could this help us in the fallow times, or times when Christianity seems to be in decline?

**Read Lk 1:67-80** How does Zechariah interpret the signs? See verses 68-75. How do we look for fulfilment of God's promises? In times after Christ, what signs do you think we could look for to see God's activity?

**Pray Lk 1:76-79** over each other, hearing it addressed to you.

*Our church motto for 2015 will be 'Shine among people like stars lighting up the sky, as you offer them the message of life' (Phil 2:15-16, GNB)*