

Springs in the Desert

Mission, Communion, Community

Bromley Parish Church weekend at Pilgrim Hall September 2005

www.formation.org.uk

For those of you who were unable to attend and those who would like to revisit what they heard, Viv and Sheila Thomas have kindly made their session notes available. They will be serialised in the Key over the next few months, starting this month with Friday's opening session.

Back ground text to the weekend: Ephesians 3:1-4:16

Intro reflections

Question and feedback: If you met an alive and mature Christian community what would it look like?

There is a description of mature Christian living in Ephesians. Paul – who is in prison - writes, 'Then we will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming' (4:14). He goes on, 'Instead, **speaking the truth in love** (mission), we will in all things **grow up into him** who is the Head, that is Christ (communion). From him the **whole body, joined and held together** by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work (community)' Ephesians 4:15-16

The Christian gospel is about life and being fully alive. This life is a flourishing life. In Romans Paul writes:

- 'For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit' Romans 14:17
- 'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit' Romans 15:13
- 'I know when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ' Romans 15:29

This all comes to us as we follow Jesus and it can be divided up into three parts or circles: **Mission, Communion and Community**. It is around these three main ideas that these talks are based. But before we do this we have to back up a little and think about following.

Key orientating points on following:

- We are always following something
- To follow means momentum and movement
- You have to be attentive to the movement of the one you follow
- To follow means a measure of trust