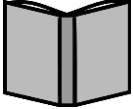









Small Group/ Reflection Notes

Session 2:		Let the waters be separated – Day 2
 Read	Genesis 1:6-8	 Listen again ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Talks
 Discuss	<input type="checkbox"/> Do you or someone you know live in apparent chaos? To what extent does this create space for creativity? What would it take to bring order from this chaos? <input type="checkbox"/> Have you ever swam in a river or lake? What does it feel like to swim? <input type="checkbox"/> When have you felt most thirsty? How did you feel? What insight does that give you into the lives of those living with a shortage of safe water?	
 Go further	<input type="checkbox"/> God's power and creativity go together. Both/and, not either/or. Which are you drawn to more? What do you need more of right now? <input type="checkbox"/> If God sends rain on the 'righteous' and 'unrighteous' (Mt.5:45), why are some people suffering disproportionately with draughts/ floods? What responsibility do we have? <input type="checkbox"/> God separated 'sky' and 'sea'. How do you separate your chaos to create order?	
 Reflect	<input type="checkbox"/> Which one verse stands out to you? Why do you think it grabs your attention? <input type="checkbox"/> Which verse(s) will you need to think more about? Why? <input type="checkbox"/> Serve/ drink chilled water. On a hot day, how does a cool drink of water feel? What does it do for you? Thank God for the gift of water.	
 Do	<input type="checkbox"/> Go for a swim and enjoy what God has made for you. <input type="checkbox"/> What 'next step' could you take to conserve water? <input type="checkbox"/> What better use could you make of rain water? <input type="checkbox"/> How could you become more water-efficient at your home or work?	
 Pray	<p><i>Dear God, thank you for the gift of water. Help me to celebrate, protect, and share what You have made. Jesus, give me Your Living Water. Let it refresh the areas of my life that are parched. Send Your Holy Spirit to flow to the deepest, driest parts of my being. Amen</i></p>	
 My question:		



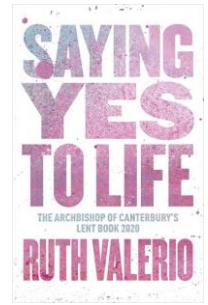
If you're not yet in a small group, why not join one!

Check out: ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/SmallGroups

Can't see a small group that suits your availability/ interest? Why not start one!

Email: SmallGroups@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk

Background



Genesis 1:6-8: Day 2 - God said, "Let the waters be separated"

In the beginning there was chaos. No structure, no design, no natural order. God spoke into the chaos and, with the power of His Word, brought the beginnings of order. When God speaks, things happen. Jesus is *the* Word (Jn.1:1-3).

Chaos can be the place of creativity. God brought order to the chaos by creating some basic structure, separating out 'sky' and 'sea'.

Alongside air, water is essential to life. It is precious. We need it for hydration. We can survive no more than a few days without it. Without water we die. Since 'the beginning' finding safe and sufficient sources of water is a basic human preoccupation.

Water is also essential for our food supply. It's not just that some eat fish, water hydrates and nourishes our other sources of food, such as animals, fruits, plants, and vegetables. It is essential to the food chain.

Water enhances life, enabling us to keep clean, swim/ keep fit, travel/ transport goods, and, increasingly, to generate energy/ hydro-electricity.

Water is vital! Freshwater covers less than 1% of the earth's surface, we abuse it at our peril.

Rain does not discriminate. God sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous (Mt.5:45)

Jesus speaks a word and the wind and waves obey (Mk.4:35-41). God the Son is the Word and Creator after all. He is the Lord of all Creation. Jesus is the Living Water (Jn.4:13-14). Think about the qualities and uses of water. These are a mere reflection of what Jesus, the *Living Water* is and does for us.

In the Bible, the Holy Spirit is pictured as water or rain. During times of personal and shared draught, we pray that God drenches us with the 'rain' of His Holy Spirit. If you are thirsty for God, come drink from His Spirit (Is.55:1-5). How thirsty are you for God this Lent?

The river of God flows from creation in Genesis (Gn.2) to new creation in Revelation (Rev.22:1-2), bringing life to all wherever it flows. We are invited to step into God's river and then go deeper (Ez.47:1-12). We re-enact this through believers' baptism. We crave 'spiritual' water

As well as bringing life, water can sometimes also bring suffering and death. Many were drowned in the great flood (Gen.7) and when the Red Sea swallowed up the chasing Egyptian soldiers (Ex.14). Water reminds us that we are vulnerable, sometimes at the mercy of powerful, swirling forces beyond our control (Ps.69:1-3). We cry out to God for His protection and our salvation (Ps.69:14-16).

Water scarcity is a real threat to many parts of the world today. The Democratic Republic of Chad (where our BMS Mission Partners serve) is ranked the country most vulnerable to climate change¹. 90% of Lake Chad has disappeared in the last 50 years due to increasing temperatures, prolonged draughts, and over-use of the precious water. This is devastating for those already facing extreme poverty.

Even the UK is threatened². Climate change and rising population are stressing the UK's water resilience.

Reliance on contaminated water, together with poor sanitation, is a major killer. Water-related diseases, like diarrhoea, cause 2.2 million deaths a year, mostly in two-thirds world countries and especially among children and the elderly³. At Marah, Moses purified contaminated water (Ex.15:22-26). So should we.

Climate change is putting chaos back into God's order, resulting in either too little rain (draughts) or too much rain (floods). Our desire for ever cheap clothing is polluting or draining rivers/ lakes elsewhere.

It's time to respect the God-given gift of water. Let there be safe and sufficient water for all to drink!

¹ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Verisk_Maplecroft_Climate_Change_Vulnerability_Index_2016_Infographic.pdf

² <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47620228>

³ https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/diseases-risks/diseases/diarrhoea/en/