

## **Brookside Sunday 2nd December 2012 *"I'm a Christian - Get me out of here!"***

Sunday's talk was based around Mark Smith's dream previously shared on the Brookside Facebook page. This is now available as a hard copy or electronically via the the church website.

The dream is very helpful and there are principles for us to look at whether we believe we are 'walking with either of the two groups' described in the dream.

Here are some questions for you to consider:

1. Is there anything that particularly resonates with you from Mark's dream, if so, what?
2. Think about you life as it currently is. Which group do you identify with at present?
  - If it's with those walking the more difficult lower path, is there anyone you can think of who might be able to help you as you are walking your current journey? If you have become more independent, what could you do to change any sense of isolation and loneliness?
  - If it's with those walking the upper path, are there people in your mind or on your heart to whom you could offer care and compassion - whether spiritually, physically (practically) or emotionally - or even something of all three?
3. Consider the two pieces of scripture Steve mentioned (John 16:33 NIV and Romans 15:1-2 The Message). What stands out to you from these verses?
4. Here's a comment posted to Facebook by Michelle McInnes following the Sunday morning talk. How do your respond to Michelle's encouragements?

I thought that the talk this morning based on Marks dream was really encouraging. I'm sure a lot of people can relate to the feeling Mark described of being disconnected or "out of touch". It can be so isolating, especially when as Steve mentioned we look around and because we only see others from the "outside", it can appear that everyone else has it all together and we are struggling alone. I would like to add another layer to this scenario if I might be so bold. I just wanted to encourage those that can maybe relate to the walk on the lower more difficult ground right now. God is equally able to use you to reach out that helping hand to those around you as he is the "strong" people in the dream. You may not feel strong enough to completely pull someone up, but you can get alongside others who are also walking the difficult path and maybe offer a leg up, or, encourage them to reach out and grab a hold of one of the hands that is being offered down from those on the higher ground. In fact it's often during the times when we are facing our most difficult challenges that God is able to use us more than ever, as we are full of compassion and empathy and have a lot that we can offer through what we have experienced and learned in that hard place. So don't wait until you feel like you have it all sorted, that time is unlikely to come this side of heaven. Reach out now. You can be reaching down and up and alongside all at the same time. That's what makes us a family.