Small Group Sermon Questions:

Title: On Patmos; In the Spirit

Text: Revelation 1:9-20

Following prayer for the Holy Spirit to illuminate the scriptures, read the text aloud.

1. Can you remember what Brian said about the nature of Apocalyptic literature and the reasons why John would choose to use this kind of genre?
2. Consider Paul Spilsbury’s statement: “Revelation wants us to take it’s world to be even more real than the one we commonly refer to as the ‘real world’.” In what ways is John’s vision of Jesus ‘more real’ than John’s personal recollection of him?
3. The sermon discussed two pressing threats to the church: 1. the sheer impressiveness and power of Rome and 2. The attractiveness of the new progressive Christian movement led by the Nicolatains (2:14-16). Are there ways in which the contemporary church is being seduced by the impressiveness of culture and the lure of liberal, amoral theology? How so?
4. John describes the Christian life he’s living as “the suffering and kingdom and patience endurance that are ours in Jesus.” In what ways can you relate to this?
5. In what ways does the book of revelation, along with our text, teach *enduring* great tribulation rather than *escaping* great tribulation? One of the clues is found in the emphasis on *overcoming*. (-: Have fun with this one!
6. Being exiled “on Patmos” yet still “in the Spirit” is a beautiful description of the life that’s fully within reach. But being “in the Spirit” is a choice! How so?
7. What part of the description of Jesus speaks encouragement to your heart in these days? Perhaps it will help to share how you feel you’re on your own Patmos.
8. Jesus’ words to John are, “Do not be afraid”. He then tells him why he doesn’t need to be afraid. Can you hear Jesus speaking these words to you?
9. If Jesus were to place his right hand on you, what would be healed?