

ON MESSAGE IN FEBRUARY 2016.

“What is the difference between a spell and a prayer?” This is one of two questions on this subject that the group tackled on 14th February. Is prayer only a kind of sophisticated or evolved spell concerned essentially with ensuring that God responds to our needs? The group thought that God does answer prayer although that answer may be in the negative, and that unlike spells which are designed to effect a specific outcome for the person who is casting the spell, prayer is about building and deepening our relationship with God. It is a conversation rather than a demand. Prayer is at the heart of our relationship with God just as we share together when we talk with friends.

Our other topic is particularly timely, asking whether Christians should campaign to stay in or out of the European Union at the forthcoming referendum. Interestingly the group had divergent opinions on this political question, some in favour of staying in the EU and some in favour of leaving. These are political, economic and social decisions and it was clear that Christians would not automatically agree on them. However it was clear that we believed that Christians had a duty to be responsibly involved because our faith is always something which must connect with the wider world. Christ calls us to render to Caesar what is Caesar’s and this is not a call to avoid politics but to recognise that we are members of a society which needs our input as Christians, seeking always to discern that which best expresses the love and compassion of God in every situation. Our hope in this instance is for the two sides in the debate to provide the information that we need to make our decision, and that we will find the grace and strength to respect one another in our differences.

Robbie Pearson.