



Small Group/ Reflection Notes

05/04/2020		Shalom
 Read	Philippians 4:2-9	 Listen again ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Talks
 Discuss	<input type="checkbox"/> What song has got you through this week? <input type="checkbox"/> What song get you dancing? <input type="checkbox"/> Have you ever 'trained' yourself to think differently? How did you do it? <input type="checkbox"/> Why is cultivating an attitude of thankfulness so healthy? <input type="checkbox"/> What part can/ does meditation play in your life?	
 Go further	<input type="checkbox"/> v.2 Two well-respected co-workers of Paul fell out with each other. What damage can that cause? <input type="checkbox"/> v.4 When and how do you rejoice? What do you do? How do you sometimes express yourself? <input type="checkbox"/> v.6 How could you put this is into practice through prayer, meditation, thankfulness, and/ or worship? <input type="checkbox"/> v.7 What do our <i>heart</i> and <i>mind</i> each need guarding? <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Why is this such good therapeutic advice?	
 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"/> Mediate on v.8.	
 Do	<input type="checkbox"/> Make a list of all that you are thankful full. Consider posting everyday on social media for a month one thing you are thankful for. Cultivate thankfulness.	
 Pray	<p><i>Dear God,</i> <i>Thank you that You are ____.</i> <i>Thank you for ____.</i> <i>I praise You because ____.</i> <i>Thank you for the way ____.</i> <i>Help me to become more thankful, giving You praise and thanks.</i> <i>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

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Social dis-Dancing

Philippians 4:2-9

Be honest, with no-one around, have you found yourself singing, even dancing?

What's the song that's got you through this week?

I've been Social Dis-Dancing to:

I feel alive, I come alive

I am alive on God's great dance floor

This week, we've all had more time alone than we're used to. This social distancing thing has, rightly, kept us away from people. Life feels a bit different, even strange, at the moment.

We're learning fast how things work in this new reality. If you feel unsettled / unnerved, you're in great company. I think we all do.

But so too did those that have gone before us.

2,600 years BC – before Christ, those that believed in God, were forced into isolation, cut-off from all that was familiar.

In their Exile, they wondered:

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? (Psalm 137:4)

Some sat down and wept when they remembered how things used to be.

And yet, despite their sorrow and anxieties, they found themselves singing and exalting God.

Not because of how they felt, rather because of who God is.

Maybe you feel like you're in Exile at the moment. Cut off from what was familiar, 'normal'.

Later, AD Anno Domini After Christ, Apostle Paul, also found himself in isolation.

This time isolated in a prison cell. A worrying time, full of uncertainty and unknowns.

Imagine being in his shoes. How would you feel?

But Paul was to look up and out, not down and out.

Word had reached him that two people in the church had fallen out with one another; Euodia and Synctyche – two women.

Paul says they were both loyal ministers and co-workers with him in the Gospel

The King James Authorised Version translators changed Euodia (female) for Euodias (male)

Like swapping Stephanie for Stephen. It was as if the KJAV translators couldn't quite bring themselves to acknowledge Paul celebrated women in ministry, female ministers.

Paul says now is not the time for holding grudges with one another. Let it go!

If you've entered isolation with a grudge, do the same. Let it go. Don't let it fester.

As for Paul's playlist, he says,

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice!” v.4

It's as if Paul also sings:

*I feel alive, I come alive
I am alive on God's great dance floor*

Paul had much to be anxious about. But he says:

“Do not be anxious about anything.”

That's easy to say, far harder to do. So, Paul shows how to do this:

“But in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

Allow God into your anxieties. Use prayer, meditation, thankfulness, worship...

Don't leave your faith behind at the church front entrance. Our church building is closed. Just as well our faith is in Christ Jesus, not in bricks and tiles.

This is great therapeutic advice. Today, if you prefer, we might call it Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP).

Rewire the connections in your brain by, intentionally, deliberately, being thankful, speaking out praise, speak in tongues (if you use this gift)...

For it is then,

“The peace (Shalom) of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” v.7

In case we haven't grasped what Paul is saying,

Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about these things.

You don't have to be a signed-up follower of Jesus Christ to appreciate the wisdom of what He was saying. It just makes good sense.

But knowing Christ is with you, journeying with Him, brings a whole deeper experience of peace.

It goes beyond calming meditations and positive thinking in the 'here and now'.

It brings a deeper assurance that the future – YOUR future – is secure, for eternity.

Because Jesus – Risen Jesus has defeated the power of sin, disease, and death.

And the God of peace, the God of SHALOM, will be with you