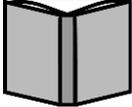
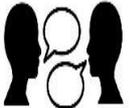


## Small Group/ Reflection Notes

	29/03/2020	Shalom
 Read	<b>John 14:27</b>	 Listen again <a href="http://ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Talks">ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Talks</a>
 Discuss	<input type="checkbox"/> What keeps you calm or reduces anxiety? <input type="checkbox"/> When and where have you felt most peaceful? At peace? Content? <input type="checkbox"/> Why might the lack of basic physical needs - like food, shelter, employment - cause such anxiety? <input type="checkbox"/> Why are broken/ strained relationships the cause of such stress?	
 Go further	<input type="checkbox"/> John 14:27: Why was Jesus' departing gift, peace? How might Jesus' Shalom (peace, wholeness, completeness, right-relationship) be different to other peace offerings? <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 2:17: To what extent do you feel like those who are 'far' or 'near' to God <input type="checkbox"/> Colossians 1:19–20: How does Christ bring about Shalom for all?	
 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"/> Ephesians 2:17: To what extent do you feel like those who are 'far' or 'near' to God? Who has moved: you or God?	
 Do	<input type="checkbox"/> Which of your relationships needs an injection of Shalom? What do you need to do to allow Shalom to flow between you?	
 Pray	<p><i>Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus, my Prince of Shalom. Help me today to receive Your Shalom, deep within my body, mind, and spirit.</i></p> <p><i>Lead me in the way of Shalom to spread Shalom to others through what I say and do.</i></p> <p><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](http://ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/SmallGroups)

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

Email: [SmallGroups@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk](mailto:SmallGroups@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk)

## Script

Listen. That's the sound of no planes in the sky. Far less traffic. You can hear the birds, the wind...

It's been a quiet week. *Almost* peaceful.

And yet, the news doesn't sound particularly peaceful.

- virus doubling every 3-4 days
- vast hospitals, mortuaries
- PM, Health Secretary and Chief Medical Officer

The roads and sky may be quiet, but peaceful? Peace-full? Full of peace?

Today the clocks went forward. Always exciting. Today you get to spend an extra hour.. at home. The comedians among you have put them forward four months. Maybe, by July, things will be better then.

Who knows? And if you did know, would that be helpful? Would that bring you more or less peace?

Jesus could see the future. He knew what was coming.

The short-term future was going to be tough – real tough.

- Arrested on false charges
- Beaten, tortured
- Crucified, nailed to a cross and left to die a very slow and agonising death
- Some of His followers would let Him down
- Many would also be attacked, some would lose their lives.

But that was short-term.

Long-term, the true future was very different.

- Death could not hold him, no grave could
- He would be resurrected to new, eternal life.
- Resurrected life for all his followers He would be beat not just his own death, but the very principle of death. The death of death itself.

But, at that moment, His followers were a mix of bemused and scared.

Jesus said to them:

*"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" John 14:27*

He didn't say, "A nice sunny afternoon I leave you" or "A calming picture and soothing soundtrack I leave you." No. Jesus said, PEACE I leave with you. My PEACE I give you. What did He mean?

The peace He was leaving was the SHALOM kind.

Shalom is a Hebrew word – usually translated peace. But it's better understood as wholeness, completeness, right-relationship. There are many layers to Shalom.

Shalom begins with physical well-being – food, somewhere safe to live, a job that brings dignity... It's hard to feel Shalom when these are missing. Maybe it's this fear and the absence of Shalom that has led to stockpiling. With the threat of Covid-19, we all crave Shalom.

Shalom continues when there is justice between people – right relationships. It's hard to feel Shalom when you've fallen out with someone. Those of you living with others, self-isolating together, you might already be climbing the walls.

Shalom then goes deep within us. It's when we live with integrity and wholeness – honesty, truth-telling, kindness, generosity, compassion...

Apostle Paul described this absence of Shalom well when he said:

*it's like a war raging inside. The things I want to do, I don't do.  
And the things I don't want to do, I do.*

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Jesus came to bring Shalom to those:

- left on the margins, worried about what they will eat or what they will wear
- worn down by abusive religion
- who feel judged and excluded by others
- who feel God is not for them

Shalom was not part of the Gospel, a bi-product. It was, IS the Gospel. Shalom is what Jesus came to be and do. Everything He did was about bringing Shalom. Because He was SHALOM – Prince of Peace, Prince of Shalom: Remember, Isaiah had said:

*For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6*

Paul says, “Jesus came proclaiming peace” – Shalom

*“He [Jesus] came and preached PEACE to you who were far away and PEACE to those who were near.” Ephesians 2:17*

Today, if you’ve struggled to keep your head together.. if you feel far away from God..

Jesus, Prince of Shalom, comes to you.

And, if this week, you’ve been surprised at how you’ve managed to keep going.. if you’ve found yourself drawing closer to God..

Jesus, Prince of Shalom, comes to you too.

Christ brought Shalom, not by saying nice words or doing nice things for people. Christ brought Shalom by living Shalom. So, when things got tough and he was arrested, falsely accused, beaten, crucified, Christ continued to respond with Shalom. He didn’t fight back. He went to the Cross. It was necessary to prove that Shalom really is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

*“God was pleased . . . through [Christ] to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making PEACE through [Christ’s] blood, shed on the cross” Colossians 1:19–20*

And before anyone says, a fat lot of good it did Him. Three days later, BOOM. The resurrection of Christ. Death could not hold him

Our challenge is not only to receive Shalom, it is to spread Shalom to others.

Paul says, put on your shoes and be ready to spread the Gospel Agenda of peace/ Shalom

*“And with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.” Ephesians 6:15*

For the next few weeks, put on your slippers to bring the Gospel of peace

If we want people to experience shalom, we first need to ensure they have enough food, somewhere safe to live, a job...

If I want to experience shalom I need to put broken relationships right. I can no longer have enemies. I may not like people

This week, despite your circumstances, receive Christ’s Shalom, deep within your body, mind and spirit.

And spread Shalom to others.