



Small Group/ Reflection Notes

	21-05-2023	Joel: the lost years	
 Start	<input type="checkbox"/> What has been the highlight (and lowlight) of your week?		
 Discuss	<input type="checkbox"/> Looking back, we've all had moments we regret that changed the course of our lives? Danny, aged 11, wet himself at a school event, which led to daily bullying throughout his Secondary education. What's yours? <input type="checkbox"/> For some, it's not so much a moment, more like a 'season of life' that they feel they lost as a result of, say, physical or mental ill-health, being a young carer, addiction, a relationship that did/ did not happen, unemployment... What's your story? <input type="checkbox"/> Have you ever had something taken from you, only later to be returned? How did you feel? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you know someone who lost an education and yet, in later life has achieved educational or career success? What do stories like this do for us? <input type="checkbox"/> What are the fundamental differences between a locust and a human being? Some speak of " <u>swarms</u> of immigrants crossing the Channel" Why is this language de-humanising? Why is it so dangerous? What does history tell us it can eventually enable?		
 Read	Joel 2:23-27	 Listen again	ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Watch
 Explore	<input type="checkbox"/> v.23 : What is God promising? Why? To who? In response to what? <input type="checkbox"/> v.24 : What calamity have they previously experienced? Given all that they lost, how might they (you) have felt hearing this promise? What's the significance/ symbolism of: Grain (bread)? Wine? Oil? How are they the <i>means</i> , as well as the promise? <input type="checkbox"/> v.25 : What is God promising? Why? What have you lost to 'locusts' in your recent/ distant past? Mirroring Joel 1:4 , what has been your experience of the 4 ways Joel says locusts attack/ eat away at us?: Swarming locusts eat the fruit, all that we've laboured to produce, what we need to provide for ourselves & others, our purpose. Cutting locusts eat/strip the leaves, leaving branches (us/you) exposed/ vulnerable/ shamed. Hopping locusts attack the stem from ground level, eating its (our/your) strength, resilience, hope. Destroying locusts dig down underground to attack the roots, it's (our/your) identity/ soul. <input type="checkbox"/> v.26 : Why is praise/ worship a right response? Do we only praise when 'life is good'?		

	<input type="checkbox"/> v.27 : Why do we feel shame? Where does it come from? Read Hebrews 12:1-2 : how does Christ deal with our shame?
 Go further	<input type="checkbox"/> v.25 : What happens if the 'calamity' we experience(d) was 'sent by God'? Why would God do this? How do you reconcile this with the description of God in Joel 2:13 ? How much is due to the consequences of our own folly/ poor decision(s)? How much is due to God's 'game plan' to bring us 'back to our senses'?
 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"/> Meditate especially on v.25 . What does this mean for you?
 Do	<input type="checkbox"/> Do something positive and opposite to whatever it is 'locusts' took from you.
 Pray	
 My questions:	

If you're not yet in a small group, why not join one! Check out: ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/SmallGroups
Can't see a group to suit your availability/interest? Start one! SmallGroups@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk.