

Word notes Sunday 17/10/2010 Roy Wheeler
Peace & Joy in all Circumstances

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Text: John 16:33

Do listen to the talk podcast if you missed it – you will be blessed.

We live in potentially challenging times, with troubling news about our nation's economy, society, morality but this should be no surprise to Christians as Jesus promised us that we would have "trouble", that there is an enemy who wants to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). Thankfully Jesus also said that he had overcome the world – and did so before the cross, ie as a man, and hence an example that through him we too could be overcomers. Two of the things the enemy wants to steal are our peace and our joy.

Peace

They will have trouble and yet they and we can still have peace, how is this possible? The key is in how we respond on the inside to things that happen on the outside – is it in fear or peace? In times of trouble satan tries to rob us of our peace and our joy. What should we do, is there anything we can do?

Proverbs 4:23 and John 14:27 tell us to guard our hearts and not let them be troubled – the onus is on us to keep them safe. Out of our hearts comes our response to the issues of our lives. This is why in times of trouble we respond differently and others can see. Thankfully too there is no condemnation from the Lord when we mess up, instead there's forgiveness when we bring it to him.

Joy

In Nehemiah 8:10 we see that "The joy of the Lord is your strength". No wonder the enemy wants to steal it! When we remain joyful on the inside while things on the outside are going wrong the better we'll be able to stand. When we are despondent, praise lifts us. The kind the Lord loves the most is sacrificial praise which includes praising when you don't feel like it.

In John 16:22 Jesus tells us that no-one can take away our joy (not even satan) so if it's gone we must have let go of it.

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

In what ways does the enemy try to steal your peace or joy?

How does James 1:2 tell us to handle these things?

Sounds too simple? Take a look at each of these passages and say what you would do to make each be true for your life: John 14:27; Prov 4:23; Phil 4:6,7; Phil 4:4; Heb 1:9; Hosea 4:6

Pray for any specific circumstances that are shared – but pray for peace and joy to be restored and for the person to be built up in faith so that the next time they can stand firm.

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

Continue taking turns with the questions posed last week:

Testimony Time: Ask two or three cell members to share their testimony as they would to a non-believer who had asked the question: "Why are you a Christian". Take turns over the next few weeks to get everyone to share.

If you've done that recently try this:

What do you believe: Ask two or three cell members to answer the question "What is a Christian?"