**Small Group notes – 25 April 2021**

**Singing in Babylon, Week 2**

**Welcome** – What is your favourite song of all time and why? (You don’t have to sing it! 😊)

**Worship** - Read Psalm 137 – a Psalm of lament…

* Bring before God in prayer any of the things that have stirred (or continue to stir) sadness in your heart at this time.

**Word - Singing in Babylon – Finding purpose in life’s second choices**

Avoid Early Graduation – Daniel 1:3-6

Reality-check…hard, biblical truths reinforced by the first two chapters of SiB…

1. We don’t live in a world where God’s will is always done
2. Life as an authentic follower of Jesus Christ will involve pain and suffering
3. Life is not fair. Bad things happen to good people
4. God’s people, the Church, are in exile

We, like Daniel, face these hard truths and a situation of exile.

This does not sound like Good News, but God is in it, God is with us and God has purposes for us, as he did for Daniel…

**Lessons from Daniel’s example:**

1. Daniel was willing to open his mind, but was careful to guard his heart
2. Daniel was prepared to continually learn and adapt
3. Daniel was alert to God-given opportunities for godly influence

How can we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?...

* Follow Daniel’s example, follow Jesus’ example

**Questions (choose a few…)**

* In what sort of situations should we, as Christians, be ready to perhaps compromise more? What are the situations where compromise could be “dangerous” and so should be avoided?
* Should we, as Christians, spend as much time as possible with each other and with “Christian/church activities” in order to build faith? Or should we spend less time in a church context and more time seeking opportunities to engage with those of other faiths/outlooks on life?
* How important is it for the Christian life to be a “lifelong learner”?
* Which are the areas of society where, if we are not careful, we might allow our minds to be shaped by the surrounding culture and social pressures, rather than by God’s Word and Spirit?
* What *are* you and God working on at the moment?
* What should we as a church, and we as The Church, consider doing differently as a result of COVID-19? (don’t be afraid to feed in suggestions to the leadership…)
* In his book, Jeff Lucas suggests that, in the circumstances of life, we can “choose our attitude”. Do you agree with this?
* What are your particular “U-G-GOs” (Unique God-Given Opportunities)? i.e. potential places/opportunities where you, in particular, could have an influence for God’s kingdom…
* Is William Temple’s suggestion that the church primarily exists for the benefit of those who are not its members still true today?
* What might it really mean in practice for us today to “sing the Lord’s song in a strange land”?