

ASPIRE

JUNIOR

SOUL MOVES
& BODY GROOVES



WORSHIPARTS

ASPIRE 

ASPIRE – SOUL MOVES & BODY GROOVES

Junior lesson notes – best for kids 10 and under:

1. Dancing for Joy
2. Being in the moment
3. Dance promotes a health and active lifestyle
4. Dance provides connection to others
5. Dance is a celebration of our body
6. Dance is escape
7. Dance is meditation
8. Dance is the ultimate healing
9. Dance is prayer
10. Dance is a celebration of your soul

Note to teachers:

There are a lot of ideas here. Please feel free not to treat this as a strict script, just grab from it what grabs you, built in what is authentic to you, and run with that.

If you aren't much of a dancer yourself, consider going on the journey with the class members – do the exercises and report on your progress to them, it may be a way to disarm and engage them.

These notes are designed for senior students. In general, over 10. The concepts are more abstract, imply a more personal relationship with God, and the issues include body image and sexuality.

If you unsure about using what is in this version, check out the corresponding junior lesson and use whatever you feel best matches your group dynamic.

And thank you. The energy you all bring to Aspire is awesome and definitely an inspiration to us at head office.

All the best!

WEEK 1: SERIES INTRODUCTION & DANCING FOR JOY

'Praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord, praise the Lord.' **Psalm 150 4-6 NIV**

Outcome

- We'll discover each other's favourite happy dance.
- We'll learn that all good things come from God. When we do our happy dance, it is a way of praising God for the good things in life.

Dancing for Joy

This term we are going to talk about how what dancing can teach us about life and about God.

We are going to talk about why people dance, and what we can all get out of dancing. Today we are going to talk about **dancing for joy**.

I'm thinking particularly about the happy dance you do just for yourself, not for anyone else. It's a way of connecting to what's good about being alive, whether that's your favourite part of your walk to school, a happy morning at home, or what you do when you open a Christmas present or hear some really good news.

Discussion

1. Why do you think people dance?
2. What do you like about dancing?

Activity – showing off our happy dances

What is your happy dance? Take turns showing each other your goofiest happy dance.

When you are done, try to join some of them together or do them at the same time to make a group happy dance.

If you have time, make a short video on the teacher's phone of your group happy dance.

Learning

There is an ancient song in the bible that says:

'Praise God with dancing! Praise him with guitars and flutes! Praise him with cymbals, especially the loud ones! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!' (Psalm 150 4-5, paraphrased)

You may not have thought about whether there is a higher power, or a God. But this song is saying that when you dance for joy, it's not only about the thing that is making you happy in the moment. It's also about God.

Because all good things come from God, after all he made everything.

I believe that when you are dancing for joy, you are actually praising God's goodness, whether you know much about God or not.

Learning

You may not know this, but the Bible has a song book in it. It's called the book of Psalms, which is a book with many song lyrics and poems. Unfortunately, the music is lost, we have no idea what the tunes were.

But I guess the one I'm about to quote was a totally upbeat dance tune. It's the last one, psalm 150. It ends the book of Psalms like any proper musical, with a feel good moment and a dance routine. The lyrics are:

'Praise God with dancing! Praise him with guitars and flutes! Praise him with cymbals, especially the loud ones! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!' (Psalm 150 4-5, paraphrased)

You may not have thought about whether there is a higher power, or a God. But this song is saying that when you dance for joy, it's not only about the thing that is making you happy in the moment. Its saying that good things, goodness itself, happiness, blessing, call it what you will, has a source. And that source is God, who made everything.

I believe God made us and made joy, that he loves us and wants good things for us. I believe that when you are dancing for joy, you are actually praising God's goodness, whether you acknowledge God or not. And whatever you believe, take this from this lesson. Your happy dance is a spiritual connection to happiness. Please don't ever forget that feeling.

There will be times in life when you really need to find your happy dance again. You may think it's gone forever, but it isn't. You've probably already danced it many times, and will dance it many more. So even if you are in a moment where your brain says dancing it seems impossible, your body can remember it. Your happy dance was real and it can be real again.

WEEK 2: BEING IN THE MOMENT

'Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, while he and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets.' **2 Samuel 6: 14-15 NIV**

Outcome

- To discuss being in the moment, good and bad aspects.
- Tell the story of King David dancing in the moment to celebrate the presence of God
- An introduction to the idea that having the Holy Spirit in us allows us to be in the moment with God.

Introduction

Our homework last week was to be able to share a happy dance either a story or a selfie. Is anyone up for that?

This week we're thinking about how dancing is **being in the moment**, and talking about the pros and cons of being in the moment.

We have various ways we talk about being in the moment: you might say 'YOLO' – You Only Live Once. Or talk about 'taking time to stop and smell the roses' – which means appreciating the good things around us every day, not just always being in such a rush, or so distracted that we don't enjoy life.

Discussion

1. What thoughts do go through your mind when we are dancing in class?
2. Do your parents or teachers ever tell you to stop being distracted? What sorts of things distract us?

Activity - the DVD Dance Game:

In groups of about 2-4, allocate one person to be the caller. They periodically call out instructions from the list below. The others improvise an everyday scene – suggestions below.

The calls operate like a DVD remote control – you have to do the following:

- **Record:** Do everything super nice, super polite, perfect for instagram
- **Not recording:** Do everything normally and messy like real life
- **Fast Forward:** Do everything in double time
- **Rewind:** Redo everything backwards
- **Slow Motion:** Do everything half speed
- **Stop:** Immediately stop whatever you are doing.
- **Pause:** Immediately stop whatever you are doing and glitch on the spot like a gif
- **Eject:** Lie flat on the floor

Scenes that could be used (feel free to improvise)

- Shopping for clothes and shoes
- Making, serving and eating dinner
- Playing a team sport (volleyball, cricket, basketball)
- An infomercial for exercise equipment
- Exploring an alien planet
- putting up a tent together and setting up a campsite

Learning

In the bible it tells us the story of King David. He was a great king, but one time he forgot to be king.

They were having a great celebration in his land, a celebration of God. King David loved God so much, that he removed his crown, his robes, got off his throne and joined the people wearing not much more than his underwear.

And he danced out of joy, because he loved God, and wanted to join the celebration. He loved God more than being king. He was totally in the moment, and he understood that dancing is a great way to do that. And God is worth doing it for.

His wife, the Queen did not approve. She thought it was undignified. But King David didn't care. When I dance, I want to be like King David, and be in the moment. I like to think about God when I dance, and remember that he is the source of goodness and love, and that he loves me.

WEEK 3: DANCING IS A GREAT WAY TO BE HEALTHY AND ACTIVE

'But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand' **Isaiah 64:8 ESV**

'She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong' **Proverbs 31:17 ESV**

Outcome

Dance is a great workout and an enjoyable way to learn the habits of an active lifestyle. The bible teaches us that our bodies are beautiful works of God's creation and deserve care and respect.

Also, if you have a healthy active lifestyle you will learn habits of long-term goal setting and self-discipline that will help you power through life's challenges.

Introduction

This week we're talking about how **dancing is a great way to be healthy and active.**

Discussion

1. Do you ever dance around the house just for exercise and to be active?
2. How does that feel?
3. What are other ways you exercise and stay healthy? How does dancing rate compared to those, in our opinion?

Talking points:

- In Australia,
 - 82% of 5-8yr olds like physical activity and see it as a priority.
 - 75% of 9-11yr olds, and
 - 45% of kids aged 12-14 The habits you set up as you go from primary to high school can keep you healthy for years to come.
- The enthusiasm gap between boys and girls widens as they get older.
- The habits you set up in primary school can keep you healthy for years to come.
- Dancing is the second most popular sport activity for girls after swimming, with Netball third.
- Studies have shown that dancing makes you smarter – it literally improves your brain, especially as you get older <https://www.thealzheimersproject.org/2014/12/ballroom-dancing-and-alzheimers-can-dancing-make-you-smarter/>

Activity

2 Games:

Artist Model Clay - 3 players. One is a lump of clay - behind her is a second player who is a model. Model takes a pose, which the 'clay' is not supposed to see. The third player becomes the artist, who will model the clay after the model. The artist is not supposed to touch the clay, can't speak and it not allowed to show the clay what to do or to become. They can just point and wave hands to indicate how the clay should form. You can also optionally have a time limit.

When done, let the model inspect the artwork and see if details fit.

Loser Ball - A simple 'pass-the-ball' game, but with 2 twists: 1) no-one can catch the ball and 2) the group must be unbelievably supportive of the catcher's inability to catch the ball.

The ball is thrown to a person, preferably by naming that person ("here John") or some other way to focus the group on the catcher. He catcher misses the ball, drops it, fumbles, or whatever, as long as he or she fails.

The rest of the group does not 'booh', but finds something praiseworthy about what the catcher did. E.g. "Good move!", "Great energy!" etc.

Learning

We played Artist model clay to remind you that your body is a precious gift, a work of art.

The bible says that God is the artist who made our bodies – he is the potter and we are the clay. God was there before we were even born, in our mother's womb, forming us. Its a miraculous process.

When the bible describes a wise person it says 'she dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong'. Its describing a wise woman at that point, but it applies equally to guys. Most people enjoy dressing up and looking their best, the bible is saying that being healthy and strong by 'dressing yourself' in strength and fitness is a way to be your best, on the inside. And yeah, girls can be strong too!

So that's lesson one: God made you, and he wants you to look after yourself.

We played Loser Ball to remind ourselves that you don't have to be a great sportsperson or dancer to benefit from being healthy. Stick with it, make it part of your life.

If you train yourself to be disciplined in health and being active, that habit will help you power through a lot of the challenges of growing up into an adult.

So that's lesson two: get in the habit of regularly being healthy and active. Making dancing a regular part of your week is a great fun way to form that habit.

For next week

Be prepared to tell us about your most active, and your laziest moment during the week. Show us a photo if you can!

WEEK 4: DANCE PROVIDES CONNECTION TO OTHERS

'Love is patient and kind, never jealous, boastful, proud, or rude. Love isn't selfish or irritable. It doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do' **1 Corinthians 13:4-5 CEV**

Outcome

- Group dancing teaches us about being aware of each other and trusting each other.
- The trust, patience, kindness etc. required for good group dancing is a visible example of the way God tells us to live in the bible. Love in action is a visible outcome of God's word.

Introduction

Last week we were talking about dancing to stay healthy. Has anyone got active and/or lazy stories or selfies to share?

When you dance with other people, there is no one winner, the group should be the winner. You have to work together and bring out the best in each other.

Discussion

1. What do you have to do to dance well with other people?
2. What makes it go wrong?
3. Have you ever had the experience of meeting a new friend and clicking straight away? If so, what do you think made you connect with someone like that?

Talking points:

- To connect with someone, you need to be aware of them, watching them, listen, trust. And you both need to be dancing to the same beat.
- A healthy relationship is about compromise – you don't lose your identity, but you respect and connect with the differences in other people, and you find common ground, both giving a little.

Activity - Alien dance party

Everyone stands in a circle. Someone starts to dance, feels it for a bit, turns to the person to their right and that person does their best to do the exact same dance. When the person who initiated the dance feels the person got it down they stop dancing and the other person goes on awhile till they create a new dance and goes to the next person. Quite intense and quite fun!

Learning

Beliefs are a bit like God. They are invisible, but you can see what they do.

For example, some people believe that wearing a face mask helps germs to stop spreading, They walk around wearing a face mask. Some believe that God wants them to cover their head, so they walk around wearing a head scarf.

You can't see their beliefs, but you can see what the beliefs get people to do. God tells us that kindness and love are the greatest beliefs we can have about how to live. He says:

Love is patient

Love is kind

Love is not jealous, boastful, proud, or rude.

Love isn't selfish or irritable.

Love doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do

I think that when a group dances well together, you are seeing invisible beliefs like that in action

If you are irritable or selfish, it is bad for the group. You need to be generous and calm to make it work for everyone.

If you are jealous, boastful or proud, you will be trying to stand out from the group. But the dance requires you all to be in sync to work, each playing your part equally, and moving as one when you need to.

If someone other than you has a solo, you must be patient and kind - let them shine. Because it makes the whole routine go well.

If you hold onto grudges and have hurts, the group won't work at all. We need a safe and place to work on mistakes and improve. It goes best if the group is affirming and trusting.

So the things you need to connect with each other to dance as a group have a lot in common with the love Jesus says we need to have to live well with each other in everyday life. Showing patience and kindness; not jealous, boastful, rude, selfish or irritable; not bearing grudges.

I have learned that is because God made love, and God is love. He knows even better than our parents how the world should work, because he made it.

You can't see God and you can't see love. But you can see how love makes people be.

WEEK 5: DANCE IS A CELEBRATION

OUR BODY

'Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies.' **1 Corinthians 6:19**

By their fruit you will recognise them. **Matthew 7:16**

Outcome

- Quick review of the first four teaching moments, to emphasise that they have been about the body
- A discussion emphasising an appreciation of what our body can do for us, rather than how it looks
- Some Christian teaching about honouring God with our body, and not allowing ourselves to be exploited.

Introduction

We've already looked a few ways that dancing is a great way to enjoy being alive, and care for our bodies. We talked about:

- **Dancing for joy**
- **Being in the moment**
- **How dance is a great way to be healthy and active**
- **How dance provides a connection to others**

Our bodies are fantastic machines. They are designed to move and help us live life and achieve what we want to achieve. Dancing is fun, it is a celebration of who we are, of the pleasure of being alive.

Discussion

1. If you were forced to choose to lose one part of your body, what would it be and why?
2. What are some of your favourite activities? Name the parts of the body that you use to do your favourite things.
3. Is there someone you know who if you saw in silhouette or shadow, so you couldn't make out their face, you could recognise just by the way they move? What are some distinctive movements of some friends or family members?

Talking points:

- Nina Simone: "What have I got that no one can take away? I got my arms, got my hands, got my fingers, got my toes, got my liver got my blood, I've got life, and I'm gonna keep it."
- Your identity comes from who you are and what you do with yourself. Ultimately, we believe it comes from being created by and loved by God. teen's body, Mum or Dad body, middle aged body, an old wrinkly body. So get used to the idea that the way you look doesn't define you,

Activity – Mirror the Spirit

Preparation:

Print enough copies of these two lists so that each student will get either list 1 or 2.
(See *Printable Resources* on page 20)

List 1: Kindness, Gentleness, Self control, Disagreeable, Selfishness, Snobbery

List 2: Hatred, Fits of Rage, Envy, Joy, Peace, Patience

Procedure:

Pair off and give each member of each pair either list 1 or 2. Tell them not to show the lists to each other, it's a guessing game.

They take it in turns to be the leader and the follower, and mirror each other.

Use the written words to improvise actions to be mirrored. After about a minute of mirroring (the leader can be time keeper). The person who is the follower has to try and guess what the word was.

Learning

Christians teach that our bodies are temples. A temple is a building that has god in it, so its saying that our bodies are like temples because God's Holy Spirit lives in them. Because of that, we are taught to honour God with our bodies, to let God be boss of our lives.

We've mentioned before that that means valuing and caring for our bodies as a gift from God.

Honouring God with our bodies can mean being careful what you and other people do with them.

You don't want to be using your bodies for bad things or disobedience. You don't want to be taking risks with it, being foolish and careless with it.

What we do with our bodies is a reflection of the spirit that is inside us, just as we reflected each other in our exercise. When we reflected the spirit of God, our bodies showed joy, kindness and gentleness. When we reflected the spirit of rebellion against God, we showed anger, hatred and other things.

If you listen to the Spirit of God inside you, it will prompt you to be loving, kind, obedient, helpful and so forth. You will use your body for those things, and there will be more of God's love in the world.

When you dance, appreciate your body, celebrate it, remember how enjoyable it is to be moving, in control, and loving the moment. Think about all the great things you can achieve with it. And take the opportunity to tell yourself you are going to treat it wisely and carefully.

For next week

Practice some power moves in the mirror to show how you can be powerful for good in the world, and be prepared to share them next week.

WEEK 6: DANCE IS ESCAPE

'Come to me, all of you who are weary and loaded down with burdens, and I will give you rest'

Matthew 11:28 ISV

Outcome

Dance can be a great, positive, way to escape from things that are worrying you. The problem with escape is that it is only temporary – eventually the dance is over. We learn Jesus' promise to carry our burdens and worries for us.

Introduction

Last week we looked at how dance is a celebration of owning our bodies, and we were going to work on some power moves. Has anyone got any to show us?

This week we are looking at **dance as an escape**. Sometimes we just want to run away from problems. Maybe we are in trouble with our parents, or we have broken something, or our friends have let us down.

Music and dancing can be an escape from yourself and your problems. You can't think about your worries while you are jumping around like a crazy thing.

Discussion

- Can you relate to dancing being an escape?
- When do you feel like you need to escape?
- Can you escape forever?

Activity – Zombie escape

All the students except one are zombies. The leader has a drum, or similar to beat – once per second. Zombies can only take a step each time the drum beats. The human can move freely. But can't leave the room. Start with human and Zombies on opposite sides of the room.

The first Zombie to touch the human is cured, the person who was a human then becomes a Zombie.

Learning

Escaping is important sometimes. While it is very important during a zombie apocalypse, at any time escaping it gives us a chance to step back from our problems, calm down, plan to survive, or even have a bit of fun.

The problem with escaping is that, when it finishes, whatever you were escaping from will still be there. You can't spend your whole life on the run from trouble. The trick is to use the time escaping in helpful ways.

The ultimate way to escape your problems is to deal with them, and leave them behind you. Jesus said 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and loaded down with burdens, and I will give you rest'. He's promising that you don't have to handle life on your own. He's saying you can trust God to look after your problems.

So choose dancing sometimes when you need to escape – it's a great option. But if you ever need to escape from escaping... I would say give your burdens to Jesus.

WEEK 7: DANCE IS MEDITATION

'You will keep in perfect peace those whose thoughts are fixed on you, because they trust in you.'

Isaiah 26:3, paraphrased

'Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the centre of your life.'

Phillipians 4:7 MSG

Outcome

We'll explore dance as meditation. This is building on last week's lesson: as well as escaping our problems, dance can help us process and start to work on important issues.

The bible promises that focussing your thoughts on God, is a path to peace.

Introduction

Last week we looked at how dance can be an escape – getting lost in music and movement can be a time to get away from pressures and problems in your life.

This week we are taking it a step further, and looking at **dance as meditation**.

Discussion

- Do you know what meditation is, have you ever done it?
- Why do you think people meditate?
- Do you think dance can be meditation?

Talking points:

- Meditation has a lot of medical benefits, releasing chemicals to reduce stress, and boost the immune system. It literally grows your brain and increases blood flow to it.
- Many indigenous people traditionally dance to meditate. The ancient people of the bible are sometimes described as praising and dancing before god for long periods of time. And many thousands of years before the bible events occurred, the indigenous people of Australia were dancing into the night to connect with and praise God.
- There is a great indigenous dance show called Move It Mob Style that is definitely worth looking into <https://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/move-it-mob-style/>

Activity – Dance Meditation

Preparation

Print out and/or post the dance meditation technique to the corps facebook page / website. We will also be putting a link on Toolkit suitable to circulate to students.

Dance meditation exercise: First, stand for a couple of minutes with eyes closed, breathing through your nose. Slow your breath and calm your mind.

Then, play some dynamic and rhythmic instrument-only music. Lyrics engage your thoughts, and the idea here is to quiet your mind.

Go into an expressive, improvised dance, feeling free to shout, hum along or even sing at the top of your lungs. Use your arms, change directions as you boogie, and don't be afraid to exaggerate movements. This is active meditation. Let the music and movement carry you, and distractions melt away by being as focused as you can on the dance.

Keep in mind a positive statement such as:

'I will love myself, and I will love others'

'Love is patient Love is kind. Love isn't selfish or irritable.'

'Love doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do'

'God my father will keep me in perfect peace, because I trust in him.'

'I lay down my burdens, to you my father God, give me rest'

Dance for 10 minutes, or until you get tired. Then lie down, close your eyes, and stay very still for a few minutes to complete this stress-relieving exercise.

Procedure

Distribute the meditation procedure and follow the instructions.

Learning

Meditation can focus us on good thoughts, including God. The bible promises God will keep us in perfect peace if our thoughts are on him.

Another part of the bible talks about it this way:

'Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Jesus Christ displaces worry at the centre of your life.'

For next week

Try to find time to do the dance meditation at least once during the coming week.

WEEK 8: DANCE CAN HEAL US

'Peter said to a man crippled from birth: "I don't have a nickel to my name, but what I do have, I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!" He grabbed him by the right hand and pulled him up. In an instant his feet and ankles became firm. He jumped to his feet and walked. The man went into the Temple with them, walking back and forth, dancing and praising God' Acts 3:6-8 MSG

Outcome

We'll look at how dance has been used to symbolise healing, and the role it literally has as therapy.

We'll learn about the spiritual healing taught by Jesus, and how dance can be an expression of that.

Introduction

How did you go with dance meditation – hands up who did it during the week, and (if anyone) how was it? Does anyone have good tips for music to meditate to?

This week is called **'dance can heal us'**. We've already seen that dance has some powerful advantages for the body:

- It is good for general health and fitness
- It has benefits for the mind and brain
- It helps delay aging
- It is great for your mood if you are depressed

As famous song from almost 100 years ago, 1928 called 'Shaking the Blues Away' said:

'If you are blue, it's easy to
Shake off your cares and troubles

Or as Taylor Swift sang more recently: 'shake it off, shake it off!'

Discussion

- Can you think of examples of dance being 'the ultimate healing' in songs, TV shows or movies you've seen?
- Do you find dancing works to make you feel better? If yes... what's an example?

Talking points:

- In musicals, when people dance when they heal their relationships, or when they feel the bad times are over and they are optimistic about the future.
- The main way that dance is used as therapy is in treating depression, so dancing to feel happy. It works both ways.

Activity – Adjective game

Preparation:

1. Come up with a short movement phrase of about 8 or 16 or 32 counts.
2. Write down on individual pieces of paper, large enough for the whole class to read (A4), pairs of adjectives:

» hot - busy	» stiff - flowing
» tired - excited	» wild - calm
» blue - determined	» bored - crazy
» angry - dreamy	» violent - cute

Procedure:

Teach students the movement phrase and then have the students in groups of 1-3 draw one of the pieces of paper out of a hat. The students must then do the movement phrase twice, the first time with the first word in mind, and the second time with the second one in mind.

Get them to practice, and then to a beat, everyone gets to do theirs in turn. The teacher stands behind each group holding up their words so people can see the transformations they are attempting. Consider making a video of the combined dance.

Activity Option 2: Song and actions

Learn the song 'Silver and Gold have I none' and work out actions for the verse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFZJFXvuvOA>

Learning

The healing of dance is a bit like the healing in all our bodies – it's how we are designed to work. If you've ever had the flu, you will remember feeling sick and miserable. You ache and for a while life seems terrible.

Then just when you think it's never going to go away, you wake up one morning and presto, it has gone. The body healed itself. You feel almost stronger than you did before you were sick. You run down the street celebrating being better. It's the same if you cut yourself, or break a bone. Your body fixes itself.

Dance works the same way, it's like God designed it to cheer us up, as well as being good for our bodies, strengthening us and guarding us against weakness.

Next time you enjoy dancing, try imagining you were lame from birth and have been healed by the name of Jesus. Because when lame people were healed in Jesus' name, they jumped up, leaped and danced.

Jesus healed lame people to help us understand the bigger healing he would do by his death. His death healed all the of the hurts, selfishness, evil, pain and sadness in the whole world, for all time.

Sometimes we are responsible for hurting people, being selfish and all the rest, and he heals us of responsibility for that. It says in the bible that he heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

That would be a great thing to think about next time you dance.

WEEK 9: DANCE IS PRAYER

Pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 MSG

'...We do not know how we ought to pray - the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express. And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is. Romans 8:26-27 GNV

Outcome

The bible says 'pray at all times', which includes when we dance. We'll look at dance as a way of wordlessly expressing things to God, a form of prayer.

Introduction

Today we are talking about **dance is prayer**.

Do you have much experience of prayer? Prayers are often read out in church at weddings, baptisms or funerals, in front of a large group.

Some people have a daily prayer time by themselves or with their parents.

The bible says we should 'pray always'. So its saying that while prayer includes those things, it includes much more as well. It also can include dancing.

Last week we talked about imagining you were a lame person that Jesus healed when you dance, and the week before that, we talked about meditating as you dance. Those are forms of prayer.

Discussion

- What are some things that people pray about?
- Do people that don't believe much in God ever pray?
- Do you think prayer changes things?

Talking points:

- There are 4 main kinds of prayer:
 - Praise - letting God know that you love and acknowledge him,
 - Regret - admitting foolish or evil things you've done, and asking God to forgive
 - Appreciating - being grateful for the good things around you
 - Your stuff: things that you and people you are concerned about are going through
- Prayer is about you asking God for things to change, and also God showing you things to change. It runs both ways, but it does change things.

Activity – First Dance

Ask students what was the first style of dance they ever did and to do a step or short movement phrase that represents that style of dance.

If some did the same style, get them to base it on a move or a person that particularly inspired them. If it is **exactly** the same, eg: gangnam style, then they have to do a variation incorporating some of the moves they've learned this term.

Consider making a 'my first dance' video with each coming forward and performing the move.

Learning

We don't always have words for the things we are feeling. We could be full of joy, or deeply troubled, or anything in between, but sometimes we just don't want to talk about it, or don't have the words.

God understands this. It says in the bible 'We do not know how we ought to pray - the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express. And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is'

Our first prayer can be a bit like our first dance, it can be the start of something really great. So if you dance to be healthy, to meditate, to practice or just for sheer joy, you might like to try being aware of bringing to God even the feelings you don't have words for.

WEEK 10: DANCE IS A CELEBRATION OF YOUR SOUL

'You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy' **Psalms 16:11 ESV**

Outcome

We are body and soul, these come together in dance, and they come together in Jesus' message to the world, dance helps us focus on, express and celebrate deep truths about life.

Introduction

We've been looking at the idea that dancing is more than just moving to a beat.

Down the ages, people have danced to express their feelings about God, life and the universe.

We've looked at how we dance to express our joy, connect to each other, celebrate the amazing bodies God has made for us, and we've experimented with thinking about God being with us as we dance. Today we are going to think about how God knows and loves each of us individually. This unique core of who we are that God knows and loves is what we call our soul.

Discussion

- Do you think you have a soul?
- How does the idea that God knows you and loves you make you feel?

Activity - Name game

Have students write their name in the air.

After everyone has done this ask them to do it with their non-dominant hand. Then assign groups of students a body part to write their name with and have the rest of the group try to guess.

First do it in place without travelling, then try to stretch it across the whole room.

Learning

We organise these classes because we know the love of Jesus, and want to show that love to you.

We did an exercise about our names to remind us that God knows each of our names, knows us in a way only a creator can.

We are body and soul, these come together in dance, and they come together in Jesus' message to the world.

He was God in a human body, giving his body to death for us, so we can know how much he loves us and be forgiven when we do wrong. He is with us in things like dance, and he listens to our prayers, to show us that he knows us.

He shows us the steps we should take in our life, like a well thought out dance routine. And he is with us every step of the way, so we can discover full joy in life, as he meant for us.

Dance can help us focus on, express and celebrate these deep truths about life.



Resources can also be downloaded via Dropbox

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/zm8djhofqbruer0/week%205%20activity.pdf?dl=0>