

LIVE IT OUT TOGETHER
The Grateful Life | Philippians 4:2-23
August 31st and September 1st, 2024

My Story Questions

These questions/activities help the group know one another and transition to deeper discussion.

- 1) What are you hoping to get out of the group experience this quarter?
- 2) What are some things that bring you the greatest joy?

Study Questions

Complete these questions for your own personal preparation to lead, but choose only some to discuss.

Big Idea: Choosing joy leads to a peace-filled, grateful heart.

Warm up: What's the difference between pretending to be joyful and choosing joy? In what recent situations have you found it most challenging to choose joy?

Read Phil 4:1-7 A grateful heart develops as we stay connected to Jesus through spiritual practices.

- 1) In the first verses we have two women who are not getting along. When has a broken relationship stolen your joy? Did other people help in reconciliation? How can being relationally connected increase our joy?
- 2) How does choosing joy influence your relationships with others, especially when disagreements arise?
- 3) Anxiety is a joy thief and prayer is an answer. What does Paul promise results from prayer and when have you seen that be true in your life? (see also Isaiah 26:3, John 14:27)
- 4) "In everything, pray!" Tell of a time you prayed for something really small and felt the peace of God.
- 5) What prayer practices have been especially helpful to you in finding peace and joy.

Read Phil 4:8-9 Choosing joy is a "mindset" that directs our actions.

- 6) Tell of the hardest situation you face now and how you can turn it to see something lovely, admirable or praiseworthy.
- 7) Why are we drawn to newsreels about car crashes and storm damage? What are some examples of things we should spend time thinking about? What practices would help fix our mindset on noble things?
- 8) Do you tend to write narratives in your head with negative outcomes? Do you think of all the bad stuff that could happen? How could thinking of Jesus at work in a situation give you more joy?

Read Phil 4:10-23 The only way to live the grateful life is to consistently choose joy over time.

- 9) Paul rejoiced in the Lord for the way the Philippians tangibly cared for him. When have you been cared for by God's people and how did that lead to rejoicing in the Lord?
- 10) Paul had to wait a long time to receive this tangible gift. What did he learn in the meantime about God's strength? Describe a time when Jesus infused strength in you? How does His strength in you contribute to joy?
- 11) How does choosing joy affect our witness to the world? Who would be impacted by your display of joy?
- 12) What core truth do you want to remember and apply from the book of Philippians? How can your group pray for you?

Responding to Jesus

Offer one of these for personal reflection before your group prayer time. Practice listening for God's voice.

- 1) Ask Jesus, "What old way of thinking is robbing joy?"
- 2) Ask Jesus, "Where are you giving me an opportunity to be content and rejoice?"