

SESSION 1

SMALL GROUP GUIDE



SMALL GROUP **A Joyful Life**

Getting Started

Welcome to session one! You and your small group are about to go on an amazing journey to experiencing joy in any circumstance! Let's start by getting to know each other.

- Share a little bit about yourself and what brought you to this small group.
- What do you hope to get out of the next six weeks?

Watch The Lesson

Each week, you will watch a session video together. You'll find space for notes, questions, and thoughts you want to share or remember. After watching the video, have someone read the lesson's discussion questions, then you can discuss them as a group. Remember to give everyone in the group an opportunity to share.



SESSION 1 Video Notes

Philippians 2:5: *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.*

The Differences Between Joy and Happiness:

Philippians 1:3-4: *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy,*

1. Happiness is _____; joy is _____.

John 15:11: *“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”*

Galatians 5:22-23: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

2. Happiness is a _____;

joy is a _____.

Philippians 1:6: *Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.*

3. Joy springs from _____.

Romans 15:13 *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (NKJV)*

Philippians 1:25 *And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, (NKJV)*

Answer key: 1. circumstantial, relational, 2. destination, daily decision, 3. faith

LET'S DISCUSS

In this section, we'll discuss how to practically apply the wisdom you have gained from the source material and Scriptures shared. We'll also explore actionable steps that can help you live out these principles.

1. This week's session defined the difference between happiness and joy. Share examples of times when you experienced happiness and times when you experienced joy.

Read Paul's words from **Philippians 1:6** as a group:

Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

2. What does this verse tell us about God's commitment to our growth and journey?
3. How does understanding that God is continually working in us affect your perspective on daily challenges?
4. Can you recall a moment when you felt God was guiding you through a specific situation?
5. How can we ensure our daily choices align with pursuing God's plan for our lives?

Read **Nehemiah 8:10b** as a group:

"...the joy of the LORD is your strength."

6. What does it mean to you that the joy of the Lord can be a source of strength in your life?
7. Why does our relationship with Christ impact our ability to experience genuine joy?
8. Give an example of a time that brought you temporary happiness but eventually left you feeling let down. What did you learn from that experience?
9. Share a time when you felt sustained by God's joy even in challenging circumstances.
10. What practical steps can you take to focus your life on Jesus and experience this joy consistently?
11. How can daily connection with God and other godly friends and family reinforce this joy in your life?

GO TO GOD

No matter the twists and turns of life, turning to God is always the right direction. He is the constant source of our joy, a wellspring that doesn't dry up with shifting circumstances. While happiness may ebb and flow, God's joy is eternal and unwavering.

Take time to:

1. Open up about the areas in your life where you find yourself chasing after fleeting happiness instead of the enduring joy of the Lord.
2. Intercede for others, noting down specific points so you can uphold them in prayer throughout the week.
3. Celebrate and share the joyous moments God's given you! What are you most grateful for today? Which prayers have you seen answered?

