

08/30

HOME GROUP GUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

LISTEN

Listen to the sermon and read through the main passages(s)



REFLECT

Prayerfully answer the questions below



DISCUSS

Meet with your group to discuss



RESPOND

Apply the truth of God's word to your life

BACKGROUND:

Paul writes from prison, facing difficult circumstances, selfish rivals, and an uncertain future. Nevertheless, he can rejoice because his delight isn't rooted in his situation or natural temperament. Instead, his joy is centered on Jesus. He celebrates whenever Jesus Christ is preached, honored, and experienced. As a result, he views his imprisonment as a tool in God's plan, serving to advance the gospel.

In prison, Paul faces the possibility of either living or dying. Yet he knows Christ remains at the center of both outcomes. Either Christ will sustain him in life or welcome him in death. This confidence allows Paul to face uncertainty with anticipation rather than apprehension. When Christ is our life, neither present circumstances nor future uncertainties can take away our deepest joy.

OPEN:

1. When plans change unexpectedly, are you quick to adapt, or do you need time to adjust? Explain your answer.

REFLECT:

2. Read Philippians 1:12-18. What benefits resulted from Paul's imprisonment? Based on verses 15-18, why is Paul able to rejoice even if some preach Christ out of selfish motives?

3. Read Philippians 1:19-26. What gives Paul confidence as he confronts an uncertain future? What does this passage reveal about the difference between joy rooted in circumstances and joy directed toward Christ?

4. It can be tempting to reduce our faith to a set of principles and think, "If I do good, good will come my way." If Paul had adopted this mindset, how would it have affected his faith and ministry? Why is it essential that faith be both principled and personal?

APPLY:

5. Considering Paul's example, what do you think is the most important thing to keep in mind when facing difficult circumstances? What aspects of your life might change if you practiced this more regularly?

6. What difficult circumstance is currently making it harder for you to experience joy? How might asking, "What is Jesus doing?" change the way you view that circumstance?

7. Do you tend to view your faith more as a set of principles or as a personal connection with Jesus? What practical steps can you take to remember that true faith encompasses both?

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