



He Gets Us.

JESUS KNEW JOY TOO

2023-01-29

Leader Notes

OVERVIEW:

Welcome back to our series, “He Gets Us”! Jesus gets our lives because he was human too. In this series we are exploring how Jesus knows what we’re going through. He cares and he is able to help you as you trust in him. Our topic this week is, “Jesus knew joy too.” Jesus loved life. He loved being at parties. He loved gathering with others for meals. He had a joy about life and his mission. In John 15:11, Jesus says: “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” The joy we are to have as Christians is the joy of Jesus. Jesus wants to take the joy that he has and place it in you. The goal of today’s study is that we would understand and embrace the joy of Jesus!

ICEBREAKER: This is What Brings Me Joy

What is it that brings you joy? Is there a certain place you love to be or activity you love to do? Maybe for you it is time with family, just being together or perhaps going on an adventure together. Maybe there is a hobby or a sport that when you engage with it, you get filled up with joy. Share with the group what it is that brings you joy!

STUDY:

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7 NIV

Joy is something we all desire to experience but too often it seems difficult to grab hold of. Jesus gets us when we struggle to experience joy. He has given us his Spirit to empower us to know his joy each day, no matter what life throws our way. For the first part of our study, let's explore this question - As a follower of Jesus, how can I experience his joy?

1. What was your home life like growing up? Would you describe your home as "joyful"? Why or why not?
2. Who in your life would you describe as a particularly joyful person? What about this person that would cause you to describe them in this way?
3. Joy is both a gift from God and something we can cultivate in our lives. The root word for joy in Greek is chara which is closely related to the Greek word charis for grace. What have you found helps you to cultivate joy in your life?

LEADER NOTE: Cultivating God's joy in our lives is a lifelong journey! As we commit to obey Jesus by following his teachings and loving him first in our lives, God will grow our joy. Meeting with other believers for worship, thanking God for what he has done for us and actively growing our love for him are key ways we can cultivate his joy in our lives.

4. When you face obstacles to joy, what helps you overcome them?

LEADER NOTE: All of us battle with obstacles to our joy. We often see our circumstances as the main obstacles to joy. But our response to our circumstances is strategic to how to overcome obstacles and experience joy. A key area where this takes place is in our battle between our old nature (our sinful nature) and new nature in Christ. Will we say yes to our old nature and allow it to steal our joy, or will we say yes to what God is doing in us and put on our new nature? Another key to overcoming obstacles is to bring our obstacles to God. God invites us to pour out our hearts to him, to bring our troubles to him. As we do this, he helps us to see beyond our current trials to the joy that awaits us in heaven. (see 2 Cor. 4:17-18)

5. **READ:** Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. NIV

- How does God's Spirit help us to experience his joy?

LEADER NOTE: The fruit of the Spirit is evidence of God's saving work in our lives. These are character traits that show up in us more and more as we grow in our walk with God. The fruit of the Spirit is in contrast to the "fruit" our sinful nature produces. As long as we are in our earthly body, we will battle with the desires of our flesh. But God has given us his Spirit to empower us to live in a new way and to produce new fruit, including joy!

THE JOY OF JESUS

Jesus was a man who was filled with joy. He laughed, danced, went to parties and experienced life with gusto. Let's explore this more as we learn how we can experience joy like Jesus did.

6. Were you surprised at all by the teaching on Sunday that Jesus was a joy filled and happy man? Do you agree with the teaching? Why or why not?

7. Do you think Christians today think of joy as a normal characteristic of Jesus? Why or why not?

8. Why do many Christians think of Jesus in mostly sober and serious terms? Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

LEADER NOTES: When we think about Jesus we might mainly remember his suffering for us by dying for us on the cross. This along with thinking about Jesus' high calling to give up our lives and follow him can make us think of him mostly in sober terms. It is important to remember what Jesus has done for us on the cross. He told us to do it! It is also important to take his calling on our lives seriously. But we should also remember that Jesus loved life and experienced the joy of life with gusto. As we get to know Jesus and follow him, it is important that we know him for the fullness of who He is, a man of sorrows and a man of joy.

9. **READ:** Luke 2:10 The Angels Announce Jesus' Birth

10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

- What do you notice here about the joy that Jesus' birth brought us?

LEADER NOTE: When the angels announced Jesus' birth to the shepherds, they said that his birth was "good news that will cause great joy for all the people." Jesus' birth brought light into our dark world. God gave his Son to be our Saviour. In Jesus we experience God's love and forgiveness like never before in history. This good news is cause for great joy!

10. **READ:** John 15:9-11

9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

- What do we learn from these verses about how to experience Jesus' joy?

LEADER NOTE: Key to experiencing the joy of Jesus is remaining (abiding) in him. To remain in Jesus is to follow him and submit to his ways. Remaining in Jesus is a moment by moment awareness of his love and dependence on him. This includes keeping his commands, particularly to love others as God has loved us. As we follow Jesus, he gives us his Spirit. Jesus, the Source of joy, now lives in you as you follow him.

11. **READ:** Hebrews 12:2

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. NIV

- What do you notice here about how Jesus went through his greatest trial with joy?

LEADER NOTE: Jesus was able to face his greatest trial by focusing on the joy that was to come. He did this by faith as he focused on the other side of the cross – fulfilling his Father’s mission and bringing us salvation. Jesus went through all of the emotions we experience as we face trials, but he saw through to the other side and that is what sustained him. As we face trials today, Jesus invites us to keep our eyes fixed on him, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

- How do we reconcile the teaching that Jesus is both a man of sorrows as well as a man of joy?

LEADER NOTE: Jesus experienced life’s challenges and joys head on. When he was misunderstood and rejected, Jesus experienced sorrow. But there were many occasions in Jesus’ life when he experienced great joy. Jesus lived the teaching in Ecclesiastes that there is a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. (see Ecclesiastes 3:4)

12. How balanced are you personally when it comes to being joyful and serious at the same time?

13. When it comes to evangelism and the gospel being the “good news” are we prone to shift it from “good news” to “believe it or else” news and if so how can we better communicate it as “good news”?

14. What step could you take to become more aware of God’s joy, to grow your joy in him this week?

PRAY:

Read the following verse out loud together as a group, then spend time praying these words over one another.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13 NIV

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