

# CHRISTIAN JOY

PASTOR JIM DAVIS | ROMANS 15:13 & GALATIANS 5:22-24

**“BUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS, SELF-CONTROL; AGAINST SUCH THINGS THERE IS NO LAW. AND THOSE WHO BELONG TO CHRIST JESUS HAVE CRUCIFIED THE FLESH WITH ITS PASSIONS AND DESIRES.”**

The first thing is to realize that joy is a gift from God. The root word for joy in the Greek is chara, which is closely related with the Greek charis for “grace.” Joy is both a gift of God as well as a response to the gifts of God. Joy comes when we are aware of God’s grace and enjoy His favor.

**Leaders:** Take your group through each section: Pray, Reflect, and Reach. Keep in mind the time allowances. In the Reflect section, feel free to focus on several of these questions instead of all as time allows.



## **PRAY** (10 min)

Pray as a group with the expectation that He is with you and that He is going to move in a special way during your meeting. Give thanks because He is worthy of your trust.



## **REFLECT** (25 min)

As you’ve had the opportunity to reflect on what God has spoken to you through the lesson this week, consider these questions as a group and discuss them.

1. **Discuss the difference between happiness and joy in the Christian life. How do people who don’t yet know Jesus understand happiness and joy?**

**THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS HAS MUCH TO SAY ABOUT JOY, EVEN THOUGH PAUL WROTE THE EPISTLE FROM PRISON. PHILIPPIANS 4:4–8 GIVES SOME GUIDELINES FOR EXPERIENCING JOY IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE:**

**“REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS. I WILL SAY IT AGAIN: REJOICE! . . . 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. FINALLY, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WHATEVER IS TRUE, WHATEVER IS NOBLE, WHATEVER IS RIGHT, WHATEVER IS PURE, WHATEVER IS LOVELY, WHATEVER IS ADMIRABLE—IF ANYTHING IS EXCELLENT OR PRAISEWORTHY—THINK ABOUT SUCH THINGS.”**

HERE WE SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAISING GOD, REMEMBERING THAT HE IS NEAR, PRAYING ABOUT OUR WORRIES, AND KEEPING OUR MINDS FOCUSED ON THE GOOD THINGS OF GOD. WE CAN EXPERIENCE JOY WHEN WE INTENTIONALLY PRAISE. DAVID WROTE THAT THE STUDY OF GOD'S WORD CAN BRING US JOY (PSALM 19:8). WE EXPERIENCE JOY BY COMMUNING WITH GOD THROUGH PRAYER. AND WE EXPERIENCE JOY BY KEEPING OUR FOCUS ON GODLY THINGS RATHER THAN ON DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES OR DISCONTENTMENT.

2. **How do you keep joy active in your life? Do you think others see you as joyful?**

3. Discuss this quote by CS Lewis. **What does it mean? Do you agree with it? Think of scriptures that support or refute it.**

**"WE ARE HALF-HEARTED CREATURES, FOOLING ABOUT WITH DRINK AND SEX AND AMBITION WHEN INFINITE JOY IS OFFERED US, LIKE AN IGNORANT CHILD WHO WANTS TO GO ON MAKING MUD PIES IN A SLUM BECAUSE HE CANNOT IMAGINE WHAT IS MEANT BY THE OFFER OF A HOLIDAY AT THE SEA. WE ARE FAR TOO EASILY PLEASED."**



## WEEKLY MEMORIZATION VERSE

**ROMANS 15:13** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.



## REACH (5 min)

Make a resolution this week to pray with the expectation of God's answer. Try to shape your daily activities around the expectation of God's presence with you. And next week we would love to hear what God has done with you and through you.