

## Joy to the World! Be Content

## TALK IT OVER

### Key Scripture

*Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! <sup>5</sup>Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. <sup>6</sup>Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup>Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. <sup>9</sup>Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.*

*<sup>11</sup>Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. <sup>12</sup>I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. <sup>13</sup>For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.*

*<sup>19</sup>And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:4-7, 8-9, 11-13, 19 NLT*

### Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Do you feel like you are naturally content, or do you struggle constantly with discontentment?
- Why does our culture constantly reinforce and feed discontentment? How do we combat that?

### Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Where does our culture look to find peace and joy?
- Paul gives us three pieces of advice for finding joy in Philippians 4: find joy in every situation, treat people well, and look to God for everything. Which one of those do you find hardest and easiest? Why?
- Pastor Lane said in the message that many of us don't want to find contentment, because then we have the right to complain and be a victim. How would you respond to that though?

### Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Worry is putting energy into something I cannot control, so that I feel like I'm doing something. Tell about a time where you did that, and how did you break free from that worry?
- Read Philippians 4:6-9. Can you think of a time where you did what Paul is telling us to do and experienced Peace where you shouldn't have? How does that experience help you moving forward in your relationship with God?
- How can we balance Paul's thoughts of being content no matter what, with the desire God has given most of us to do more, be better, help other people? Is that a sign of discontent? How do we know?

### Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

*Father, thank you for your promise that if we focus on things that are worth focusing on you will give us your peace. Help us to find true joy in contentment, true joy just because of who you are. Help us to stop trying to find joy and contentment outside of knowing you. In Jesus name, Amen!*

### Start doing. Find an action step and put it into practice.

- Start a gratitude journal. Write down all the things that you are grateful for everyday.
- Decide to treat people well. Find someone to demonstrate the love and forgiveness Jesus demonstrated to you.