

Local Group Leader Guide

Prayer

Take time each week to pause before jumping into conversation and focus our attention on Jesus. Ask that the Holy Spirit would lead the conversation and speak to us. We long to be a place to encounter His presence, so ask that He would reveal Himself to us and make us aware of Him.

Passage

John 15:9-11 - ⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Summary

As we talked about TLC’s value of “fun” last Sunday, Haley drew a connection between true fun, or joy, and the power of remaining in Jesus. The world tells us that so many other things in life are more fun than abiding with Jesus, and they do appear more fun, but if true joy is found in Jesus, then we must abide in Him. As humans, we are enticed by other worldly pleasures that pull us away from obeying, but like a child obeying their parents, obedience to God is fun because it allows us to stay within the boundaries He designed for us. When we remain close to Him and obey His way for us, it allows us to experience life in an enjoyable, pleasant and engaging way... which is fun.

Context

At TLC, when we talk about “fun” it is tied to “joy”. Scripture talks about the “joy of Your salvation” and the “joy of the LORD is our strength”. We believe that we have the most fun when we are experiencing joy. Joy is found in God Himself as He is the creator of joy. While you can have fun and not be full of joy, we believe that the most fun is when you are experiencing true, deep joy. Joy is deeper than circumstantial happiness, but rather joy is a contentment and full of gratitude. We long to be a people of this kind of joy. When we live out of this joy and have fun with the other people around us, it allows us to have deep connection with others.

Discussion

Use these questions as a guide for conversation. This time is not about asking these specific questions or even “getting through” them all. Simply facilitate a Jesus-centered conversation and if these questions help do that, then great!

1. Haley describes joy not as a feeling but as a deep knowing that Jesus is victorious over sin and death. What practices or habits help you return to that settled knowing when circumstances make it feel distant or unreal?
2. The sermon connects fun and laughter to intimacy, suggesting that shared levity opens doors to deeper vulnerability and trust. Fun leads to trust. And trust leads to depth. Can you think of a relationship in your life where this has proven true, and what does that reveal about how God might use joy as a relational bridge?
3. Ecclesiastes 3 describes two parallel tracks of human experience -- suffering and joy -- running simultaneously, and Haley warns against using laughter to mask pain rather than to genuinely fill in its cracks. How do you personally navigate the tension between grieving honestly and choosing defiant joy?
4. Haley suggests that obedience to God is genuinely fun because it keeps us within the boundaries of real joy and flourishing. Does that idea challenge or confirm your own experience of following Jesus, and why?
5. Jesus welcomed little children with warmth and safety, and Haley draws a parallel between childlike dependence and how we are meant to relate to God. Do you find it easy or difficult to approach God with openness and honesty like a child?

Prayer

This week, please take time to pray specifically for the spaces and people that God has put on your heart. This could be out loud, or even just a time of personal prayer (if people are not willing to share out loud). But collectively come together to bring our individual spaces before the LORD to advocate on their behalf for God to reveal Himself to our people.