



## Sermon Discussion Guide for Cumberland Fellowship Church Sermon Series:

### I Choose: Week 4 (October 15, 2023)

*This guide is a supplement to the weekly sermon. We encourage families and groups to use it. When we hear God's Word, we need to do more than listen. The bible says, "Be doers of the word, not hearers only" (James 1:22). Step 1: **GATHER** with your family or group. Step 2: **REVIEW** and **DISCUSS** the key points and scriptures from the sermon. Step 3: **PRAY** for the prayer requests shared by your family or group.*

#### **DISCUSSION STARTER**

What are you looking to for happiness? Why do you think so many people who have everything they want still don't feel happy? Is there a difference between happiness and joy? How can someone have joy even through challenging times? Do you have joy and contentment in your own life? Where have you found it? What's preventing it?

#### **DIGGING DEEPER 1**

**Read Nehemiah 8:10; 1 John 4:8.** Using a good Bible Study tool like *Bible Hub (biblehub.com)* or *Blue Letter Bible (blueletterbible.org)*, study through this scripture before responding to the following questions. Define happiness and joy. How do we try and accomplish happiness? What is joy? Where does joy come from? How does the joy of the Lord keep us safe in the midst of trouble? How do we not let our circumstance control our choosing joy? According to 1 John 4:8 God is love. How is true joy produced? Can you have joy apart from a relationship with God? Explain. The greater we love God and others the greater the joy in our life. A little bit of God, a little bit of Joy. A lot of God, a lot of joy. How do we choose joy in the midst of brokenness (read **Romans 8:28, 37**).

#### **DIGGING DEEPER 2**

**Read Job 23:12; Romans 15:4.** Using a good Bible Study tool like *Bible Hub (biblehub.com)* or *Blue Letter Bible (blueletterbible.org)*, study through this scripture. How have you been tempted to define joy as comfort or absence of trial? How do you grow your relationship with God? How do we rob ourselves of joy? No relationship grows without intentional communication. What is your daily prayer time with God like? What two ways does God communicate to you? Whatever you feed grows, if you feed your fear, fear will grow. If you feed your joy, then your joy will grow. How much joy do you really want? For most of us we want a lot of joy, well then you must pursue a greater relationship with God. How are you actively pursuing God?

#### **DIGGING DEEPER 3**

**Read Psalm 103:2-4; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:1-2; Psalm 118:24; Acts 16:25-26.** Using a good Bible Study tool like *Bible Hub (biblehub.com)* or *Blue Letter Bible (blueletterbible.org)*, study through this scripture. How does remembering God's faithfulness encourage you to choose joy in your current struggles? How does our focus affect our joy. Where does your focus usually go? Bad or good things? Why? How does praising God increase our joy? How can you intentionally choose joy every morning? Pastor Sam said we must focus on four things if we are to choose joy in the midst of brokenness. What are those four things? Take time to evaluate how you are purposely growing your relationship with God, how you are intentionally remembering God's past victories and His faithfulness in your life, how you are staying focused on the good, and how you are choosing to rejoice always no matter the situation or circumstance.

#### **DOING THE WORD**

**Read John 16:20-22, 33; Romans 8:37.** Have you allowed something or someone to take away your joy? If yes, what is it? If you are trying to have joy in anything besides the Lord, will you truly have joy? How does knowing Jesus has overcome the world and that He is returning again increase and sustain your joy? In what area of your life do you need to choose joy despite the circumstance right now? Christian joy is God-centered rather than self-centered. Read Psalm 37:4. That means we're not just grasping for what we can get from other people like rampant consumers. No, our joy finds satisfaction in God; therefore, we can be generous toward other people. Christian joy is indestructible, and not fragile. Read 1 Corinthians 15:54-58. A hope that the grave can destroy is not a hope worth having, but a hope that can destroy the grave is. If you do not have this eternal, indestructible gift of joy, then you simply have not yet met Jesus. What you have in your heart is a case of divine homesickness. Maybe you've looked at everything under the sun in search of a home, but your bags remained packed and your shoes laced. Your restlessness is a sign that there is something yet to be discovered. Trust in Christ who gave everything for you, the Source who came to you so that you could have joy and have it to the full.