

## The G-od Life

### Part 1: Bring it into Focus

**Objective:** To challenge to focus on Jesus and his work in our lives rather than on our circumstances

**Read together:**

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. 20 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.

Philippians 1:12-26

- What does the fact that our founding fathers considered the 'pursuit of happiness' to be a God-given right say about the value we place on happiness as a culture?
- When you think about your own life. How much of it is spent pursuing happiness?
- What do you think about the idea that 'happiness happens but joy is a matter of focus'?
- When you are faced with difficulties, what do you focus on, the obstacle or the opportunity?
- Do you tend to focus on what is most important or do you get distracted by what's going on around you?
- Do you tend to look more at what God is doing FOR you or what God is doing THROUGH you? Why?
- The pastor said that if we focused more on others than on ourselves, we would find the experience of Joy in our lives more often. Why do we find it so hard to focus on others?
- **Final Thought:** This week, rather than pursue happiness, adjust your focus and begin to experience joy.

