

## Main Street Church – Discussion Questions

Series: **JOY** (Philippians) Message: April 12. Joy vs Happiness



### Connect

: When was the last time you Laughed-til-ya-Cried, got the Giggles, Jumped for Joy or Spontaneously Danced...just a Lil...(you know you did)?

### Open with Prayer

“Jesus – You designed us to know You as the source & focus of our greatest JOY. We pursue feelings and moments of happiness through many things, but more than anything we need You. Teach us about real JOY and help us to know & experience your JOY more fully in our lives. Thank you for loving us Lord. Amen.

### Check In

:: What has God been showing/speaking to you about in your personal time with Him?

:: How can we as a group encourage one another to spend intentional time with Jesus?

{Devotional ideas (Prayer booklets...), Bible Reading Plan, Podcasts, Accountability, Encounter God...}

### Sunday Message Feedback :: Joy vs Happiness

What jumped out at you from Sunday’s message?

Which particular point or passage of Scripture most challenged, confused or caught your attention?

What did Jesus say to you to you this past week through the message?

1. We live in a culture that is constantly pursuing happiness. (Pharrell even wrote a theme song for us)
  - a. What are some ways that people pursue and try to find happiness?
  - b. How do you personally pursue happiness? What makes you feel happy?
2. Have you ever thought of happiness as being different than joy? Discuss how they are different.

### Think About It:

Happiness tends to be fleeting and depends upon temporal factors like circumstances or other people.

True Joy is everlasting and not dependent upon circumstances. Depending on the translation, the Bible uses the words “happy” and “happiness” about 30 times, while “joy” and “rejoice” appear over 300 times. The book of Philippians is a great study in the difference between joy and happiness. Written by the Apostle Paul while imprisoned in Rome, this book uses the words “joy,” “rejoice,” and “joyful” 16 times and teaches us how to have true contentment in Jesus Christ, despite our circumstances.

*“If you think of this world as a place intended simply for our happiness, you find it quite intolerable: think of it as a place of training and correction and it’s not so bad. I sometimes wonder whether all pleasures are not substitutes for Joy. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promise of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when Infinite Joy is offered us...like a 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. If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world. God can’t give us peace and happiness apart from Himself because there is no such thing.”*

Thoughts on Joy and Happiness from C.S. Lewis

3. Paul tells us in **Philippians 4:4** to “*Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again – rejoice!*”
  - : The key to living a life of joy is to be “*in the Lord.*”
  - : What do you think it means to be “*in the Lord?*” Discuss.
  
4. How does one live a life that is “always full of joy in the Lord?”
  - : What does that look like practically? Discuss.
  
5. Describe a time when you were swept away in a *deep current of life* and got a clear picture of what really mattered. Read **John 3:16** and **15:10-12**. How do God’s actions reveal what matters most to him?
  
6. **Who are the people that matter most to you?** Do you think of them, thank God for them, and pray for them? What are some ways you could be intentional this week in expressing love towards those people in your life (like Paul does in his letter to the Philippians)? Share your thoughts and ideas.
  
7. Read **Romans 3:23, 12:2** and **Philippians 1:6**. We are all works in progress, but what God has started He promises to complete. What has God started in you? How are you working with Him to bring about transformation in your life? What step can you take today so you can begin to live a life of joy?
  - a. **LEADER NOTE:** This is a great opportunity to encourage your group to attend the next Encounter God Retreat on May 1-2. The Encounter retreat is all about helping people deal with the stuff in their lives that steal and hinder their joy in the Lord...
  
8. We learned that happiness is temporary, but joy is constant and comes from a relationship with Jesus. Share one way your relationship with Christ has filled your life with JOY?

### **APPLICATION & PRAYER:** (Break into groups of 3-4)

- : What is one area in your life that you need to experience God’s JOY in?
- : Share one thing you will do this week to encourage someone so that they can have JOY.
- : Share with your group and use it as a point for prayer for one another.

**Read** through one chapter of Philippians each day (for 4 days), interacting with it using the SCOOP model. SCOOP bookmarks are available at Guest Services on Sunday or at the Office.

- S-Scripture:** *which words, phrases, verse jump out to you? which verse can you memorize in your heart today?*
- C-Confession:** *confess any sin that the Holy Spirit reveals to you as you read this chapter & receive His forgiveness.*
- O-Observation:** *write down the things the Holy Spirit shows you for – your mind, your heart & your will.*
- O-Obedience:** *write down what you need to obey and respond to, and how you will do it. ask for accountability...*
- P-Prayer:** *let your reading & response inspire your praise to God, and prayers for yourself & others.*

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- :: **PRAYER SUMMIT** – April 26<sup>th</sup>. 6pm. **Kids Summit** program provided for kids ages 2-11. Let’s go a group!
- :: **ENCOUNTER GOD Retreat** – Fri&Sat. May 1-2. Register Now! [www.mainstreetchurch.ca/encountergod](http://www.mainstreetchurch.ca/encountergod)