



JOYRIDE: Searching for Joy



BIG IDEA

Joy comes from consistently living out our values. It is a choice we all can make.



ICE BREAKER

Think back to your most memorable car ride. What made it special? Who were you with, and what emotions do you associate with that memory?



MAIN POINTS

- The Negativity bias is our tendency to focus more on negative information than positive
- There's a crucial distinction between happiness and joy: Happiness is circumstantial. Joy is deeper, more consistent.
- Paul's letter to the Philippians, written while he was imprisoned in Rome, is an example of choosing joy despite difficult circumstances.
- Three negatives that Paul's joy overcame:
 - Chains couldn't confine his joy (he used his imprisonment to spread the gospel)
 - False motives couldn't minimize his joy (even when others preached Christ for wrong reasons)
 - Death couldn't derail his joy (for him, "to live is Christ and to die is gain")



DISCUSS

1. Why do we tend to focus more on negative experiences than positive ones?
2. In your own words: what's the fundamental difference between happiness and joy?
3. What things do you often tell yourself would make you "happy"? How might pursuing joy instead of happiness change your approach to these desires?
4. Henri Nouwen said, "Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day." What makes choosing joy different from pursuing happiness?
5. How did Paul's perspective on his chains actually advance the gospel?
6. How does having something worth dying for give us something worth living for?
7. What values or beliefs do you hold that give your life meaning beyond just seeking happiness? How can you live those out more consistently?



NEXT STEP

Take a moment to write down:

1. One area where you need to shift from pursuing happiness to choosing joy
2. A specific way you can live out your values this week
3. Someone in your life who might need encouragement in choosing joy



SCRIPTURE

Luke 9:23-24 Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.

Philippians 1:20-21 ..."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. 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. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."



NEXT WEEK
SNEAK PEAK

Join us next week and invite a friend as we continue the JOYRIDE series studying the Book of Philippians!

Questions or Feedback? Email Groups@CentralAZ.com