



We are continuing in our “Smile” series, where we are focusing on the joy of the Lord. This is a great series to invite our unchurched friends to so please encourage your folks to consider who they might be able to invite!

FAMILY TIME

Take some time to share prayer requests and praise reports with each other and encourage folks to keep praying for each other’s prayer requests throughout the week and to believe that these will become future praise reports.

Let’s also keep praying for the refugees and for our summer trips to Berlin. Please see last week’s lesson for more information on what’s currently taking place, short info videos, and prayer points.

CHOOSING TO REJOICE

Last week we studied a key verse from Nehemiah 8:10 where Nehemiah tells the people, “The joy of the Lord is your strength.”

Intro question: Do any of you have stories of seeking God’s joy in the midst of difficult situations this last week?

Have people pull out their Bibles/apps and read Philippians 4:4-7:

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

As we did last week, have your group declare the key text from Philippians 4:4 to each other, “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”

Then break up into small groups of 3-4 and lead them through the following discussion questions one at a time that they can discuss in their small groups:

- What does it mean to rejoice?
- Why would Paul call us to rejoice always?
- How does Paul think we can find joy in the midst of anxiety inducing situations?
- If it is true that we can rejoice even in the midst of difficult situations, what can we do this week to intentionally rejoice in the Lord where we might not otherwise?

- Are there people in our life who need to experience more of God's joy? If so, how might we be able to help them do that?

You might also consider providing index cards for folks to write the key verse on one side and their one way to intentionally rejoice on the back. That way they can put it up somewhere to remind them about the truths that God is the author of joy and desires us to be filled with joy.

Close this time by having the groups pray for each other to intentionally rejoice in the Lord this week and to help others around us experience God's joy as well.