

WELCOME

Remember Eeyore and Tigger the Winnie the Pooh books? For Eeyore everything was doom and gloom, no matter what good circumstances came his way. For Tigger, everything was a carefree bounce through life, no matter what set backs came his way. In our daily lives, it is easy to have the attitude of Eeyore while wishing we could have the outlook of Tigger – two extreme viewpoints of life. Yet the biblical brand of joy is not simply overcoming our inner Eeyore, nor is it strolling through life in ignorant bliss like our inner Tigger. Rather, biblical joy is to be found in facing each day's ups and downs through the contentment that Christ offers.

Key Question: What gives us true happiness and _____ in life?

Key Verse: "I have told you this that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be _____" (John 15:11).

Key Idea: Despite my circumstances, I feel inner contentment and understand my _____ In life.

(Key Application #1): Let your _____ help you.

(Key Application #2): Saturate your _____ with what the bible has to say about joy.

(Key Application #3): _____ and embrace God's intimate involvement and care in your life.

GETTING STARTED

Begin your discussion by reciting the key verse and key idea together as a group. On your first attempt, use your notes if you need help. On your second attempt, try to state them completely from memory.

KEY VERSE: "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11).

KEY IDEA: Despite my circumstances, I feel inner contentment and understand my purpose in life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

As a group, discuss your thoughts and feelings about the following declarations. Which statements are easy to declare with certainty? Which are more challenging? Why?

- I have inner contentment even when things go wrong.
- Circumstances do not dictate my mood.
- I am excited about the sense of purpose I have for my life.
- I can be content with the money and possessions I now have.

1. In what ways can you relate to Roxanne's story?

2. What are some of the practical ways to find joy in the midst of troubling times?

3. What biblical examples of joy inspire you (for example, the apostle Paul in prison)?

Read Psalm 16:1-11, John 13:31-35, and John 15:1-11

1. Based on the passages you just read; what practical steps can you glean that will lead you to greater joy in your life?

2. What are some unhealthy yet common beliefs and practices that stand in the way of true joy and contentment?

3. How does faith in Christ give you reason to be joyful in all circumstances?

CASE STUDY :

Use the following case study as a model for a real-life situation where you might put this week's key idea into practice.

Haley joined your book club a few years back. As a group you spend the first fifteen minutes checking in- asking about work, family, health and hobbies. The discussion is uneventful until Haley's turn to speak, Her life seems to be a chaotic rollercoaster ride. It's either the best week of her life or it's a complete catastrophe. There is on in-between with her, and even when things are going well, she is anxious about the future. As her mentor, she has given you permission to speak honestly when you see areas for improvement in her life.

Use the following key applications from this session, what could you say or do to help Hayley find joy in her life?



Session 2:

What Will Give Me True Joy?

KEY APPLICATION #1: Let your community help you.

KEY APPLICATION #2: Saturate your mind with what the Bible has to say about joy.

KEY APPLICATION #3: Rehearse and embrace God's intimate involvement and care in your life.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Close your time together with prayer. Share your prayer requests with one another. Ask God to help you put this week's key idea into practice.