**THE KEY TO LASTING JOY**

**Philippians 1:1-11**

**WE CAN HAVE TRUE JOY IN SPITE OF OUR \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* *“I give thanks to my God for every remembrance of you, 4 always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer”* (Philippians 1:3-4)
* **When you have Jesus you have *everything* even if you possess nothing this world has to offer.**
* *“Instead, as God’s ministers, we commend ourselves in everything: by great endurance, by afflictions, by hardships, by difficulties, 5 by beatings, by imprisonments, by riots, by labors, by sleepless nights, by times of hunger, 6 by purity, by knowledge, by patience, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, 7 by the word of truth, by the power of God; through weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left, 8 through glory and dishonor, through slander and good report; regarded as deceivers, yet true; 9 as unknown, yet recognized; as dying, yet see—we live; as being disciplined, yet not killed; 10 as grieving, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet enriching many; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.”* (2 Corinthians 6:4-10)
* **Having a critical judgmental spirit will rob you of the joy that Jesus brings.**
* *“Therefore, as God’s chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive. 14 Above all, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.”* (Colossians 3:12-14)

**WE FIND TRUE JOY IN \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ WITH OTHER BELIEVERS ON MISSION FOR GOD**

* *“because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”* (Philippians 1:5)
* **“Paul says that in the fellowship of the gospel, we recognize our differences, but we celebrate our unity in Jesus and commit to give ourselves for the mission of making the gospel known.” – Dr. Tony Merida**

**WE FIND TRUE JOY IN THE ASSURANCE OF OUR SALVATION**

* *“I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 1:6)
* **Because God is the One who called you into salvation He will ensure that He finishes what He started.**
* *“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.”* John 10:28-29)
* **The assurance we have in Christ should lead us to be more committed to the mission of advancing the gospel message.**

**WE EXPERIENCE TRUE JOY WHEN WE POSSESS GENUINE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ FOR OTHER BELIEVERS**

* *“Indeed, it is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I have you in my heart, and you are all partners with me in grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. 8 For God is my witness, how deeply I miss all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 1:7-8)
* **Genuine love for others is accompanied by demonstratable action: praying, giving, supporting in difficult times, and partnership in mission.**

**CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION**

**Ice Breaker:** Share about one of the happiest moments in your life?

**Understanding:**

* What does Philippians 1:1-11 teach us about God/Jesus?
* What does Ephesians 3:14-21 teach us about joy?
* What does the word partnership (*koinonia*) convey in this study?

**Digging Deeper:**

* Where do people try to find joy? Where do you?
* How are you challenged/encouraged by Paul’s joy while in jail?
* Why is it so important to show grace and not be critical of others?
* What does *koinonia* (partnership/fellowship) look like in your life? What may need to change?
* How are we assured we’re saved until we go to be with the Lord?
* What is your big takeaway from this study?

**Loving Outward:**

* Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
* Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
* Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?

If you are not in a Connect Group and would like to get connected

to grow in your relationship with God and others,

contact the church office at 225-272-3740,

and we can help you find a group that fits your schedule.