



# ABIDE The WHY

## ICEBREAKER

Share of a time you were filled with absolute joy (not happiness) but the joy that overflows in you from the Lord.

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Read:** John 15:1-17 (series verse) Read from different versions if available.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Read:** 1 Peter 1:8

Think of a person who has exhibits the JOY of the Lord to you and those around them regardless of their circumstances. **What can you share about their character and what do you observe from others around this person?**

- **Read:** Nehemiah 8:10

The joy of the Lord comes from an understanding of who we are in Christ (His child, chosen and redeemed) and what He has done for us (saving us from our sin and restoring us to a right relationship with God, and much more). **Why does Jesus desire us to be filled with His joy?**

- **Read:** Isaiah 43:2  
Psalm 50:15  
Psalm 43:5

We can be joyful despite our circumstances. Because God is with me in my times of trouble. Because I know God has a plan to rescue me in times of trouble. Because God is bigger than the troubles I face. **Which one of the three reasons fills you with the most joy? Which one of these three do you tend to forget?**

- C.S. Lewis writes about the Trinity in Mere Christianity. He says the way they interact with each other is much like a "dance". He writes that each person of the Trinity glorifies the other. The Father, the Son and the Spirit are pouring love and joy and adoration into the other, each one serving the other. They are infinitely seeking one another's glory and so God is infinitely happy. Timothy Keller asks the question, "So if God was so happy, why did he feel the need to create humankind?" He proposes an answer. What God has enjoyed from all eternity; he comes to offer to you. He invites you into the dance of joy. In the book, The Reason for God, Keller writes, "When Jesus died for you he was, as it were, inviting you into

the dance. He invites you to begin centering everything in your life on him, even as he has given himself for you."

**Read:** John 15:8-11

**From this passage, how does Jesus describe the joyous relationship he has with God the Father? How does Jesus include His followers in that joyous relationship? What does Jesus say must happen to experience such joy?**

- "Joy is a characteristic of God's people found in His presence." — Meg Bucher

**What is the purpose of our joy overflowing? To whom should our joy overflow?**

- Describe what you do to abide with Jesus on a daily basis. Reflect on how you may have changed your methods over time. **How has it changed and why? What have you learned that is helpful? What obstacles can prevent us from spending time with the Lord?**
- **Spend time in Prayer** for each other (ask each person how we, as a group, can be praying for you this week – (including spiritual needs) and for our church (pray for the spiritual renewal of our people) and for those we come in contact through the week (that they will be drawn to God by the overflowing JOY we have in our hearts).

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

Happiness is based upon circumstance - Joy is based upon Christ. Happiness is external - Joy is internal. Happiness is based upon chance - Joy is based upon choice.

Confess to God the areas that you lack joy and ask for Him to work in your heart in these areas so that you may overflow in His joy.

## THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

The smallest act of obedience is better than the greatest intention. **What is the main thing that God has impressed upon me today? What am I going to do about it?**

## MEMORY VERSE

I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! — **John 15:11**

## PRAISE REPORTS / PRAYER REQUESTS