

The Mark of Joy

Joy is Supernatural.

Joy is Strength. Nehemiah 8:10

Joy Suckers

1. Forgetting God's blessing. Numbers 13-14
2. Wrong complaining: it is ok to complain **to** God—it is not ok to complain **about** God.
3. Negativity—it's a choice.
Philippians 2:14; 1 Peter 4:9; James 5:9; Psalm 100:4; Colossians 4:2 & 1; Thessalonians 5:18

Negative thoughts, people, environments.

4. Discontentment
Matthew 20:10-11; Deuteronomy 7:25

Causes: Comparing, Coveting

Joy is a delight. 1Thessalonians 2:19

- In the person of God.
- In the purposes of God.
- In the people of God.

My Joy is not based on what happens to me, but on what God is doing in me and through me.

To prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great meeting as you come together to connect and encourage one another to grow.

Read James 1:1-8.

James encourages us in these verses to consider it pure joy whenever we face trials.

How do you typically react to trials in your life?

In what ways have you been able to find joy in the trials you've endured?

What trials are you currently enduring? How have you handled these trials thus far?

What steps can you take to better rely on God when you are enduring trials?

How could asking yourself the following questions help you better handle your trials? 1. Do you believe that God is in control? 2. Do you believe God is good? 3. Are you willing to wait by faith to see the results of your trial?

How have you seen God develop and shape you into the person you are today by testing you through various trials?

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE GROUPS

The Psalms are full of examples of David voicing his complaints to God. What can you learn from the following passages about what acceptable complaining to God looks like?

Psalm 6

Psalm 13:1-4

Psalm 142

Another example of the Israelites complaining when things didn't go their way or they thought God wasn't meeting their needs is found in Numbers 11. As you read the chapter, look for how God responds to their complaining and the impact their negativity had on both Moses and their own lives.

God eventually gives them what they were complaining about. Why do you think He did that?

Often we are discontent because we are too focused on what we don't have rather than on all the things God has provided for us. In Deuteronomy 8:6-18 God speaks to the Israelites about this. What insights do you see in this passage that could help you not take for granted what you have or get confused about how you got it?

How can you better incorporate remembering what God has provided and has done for you into your everyday life?

Life Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and the study of God's Word (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25). Here's how it will happen:

SHARE

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal, as we feel more comfortable.

STUDY

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.

SUPPORT

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another and meeting real needs.

SERVE

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community in which we live (Ephesians 4:11-16). Throughout the quarter, it is our hope that you can find and/or be affirmed in the ways God has designed you to serve and make a difference in God's Kingdom.