

“The Light of Joy”

Follow the Star #3

INTRODUCTION

At Christmastime we often hear carols of “Joy to the World”, but have you ever noticed that it can be a struggle to have joy in the midst of a season filled with so many activities, expectations and commitments? This study looks at where true joy is found and what we can do to experience it and share it..

Ice Breaker (Optional):

What is one thing about Christmas that always fills you with joy?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

GOOD NEWS

Q1. Read Luke 2:8-11, Romans 8:31-35

On the night of Jesus’ birth the shepherds were terrified when the angel of the Lord appeared to them. What is it in Luke 2:10 that can change fear into great joy? Can you think of an instance when the good news, that Jesus was your savior, overcame fear in your life? Is there anything causing you to fear today that needs to have the light of this truth shine upon it?

CHOOSE joy.

Q2. Read Luke 10:20; Luke 1:46-55

Joy does not have to be a reaction, it can be a choice. But sometimes we choose joy for the wrong reasons. What are the two reasons for joy given in Luke 10:20? Why do you think Jesus said one is a reason to rejoice and the other not? As her cousin Elizabeth greeted her, Mary verbalized her reaction to her miraculous conception (Luke 1:46-55). What reasons did she give for her spirit to rejoice? Which of those are also reasons for us to choose joy?

START now.

Q3. Read Hebrews 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 6:1-2

If we wait until we have no problems to choose joy, we will never start. Hebrews 12:1-2 tells us to look to Christ as our example. Under what kind of circumstance did Jesus choose to focus on the joy that lie ahead? Referring back to the promises of Isaiah, Paul encourages us to see what two things as happening currently (now)? If Jesus

endured crucifixion while still focusing on joy, and our own salvation in Christ is secure, is there anything that is so powerful that it can prevent you from finding joy right now if you choose?

SHARE with someone.

Q4. Read Matthew 28:8, Luke 15:7, Luke 24:52-53

Joy can only be multiplied when it is given away. When Mary Magdalene and the other Mary received the most tremendous news imaginable: Christ had risen! Their joy was great, and they rushed to share that with the disciples. Can you remember the last time you shared the gospel with someone? At the close of Luke, the disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Where did they go and what did they do there? How does this fulfill the promise made in Luke 2:10? Why is it important that we share the reason for our joy with others (Luke 15:7)?

WRAP-UP

The good news of Jesus birth was indeed a cause of great joy for all people. But we are not joyful without intention. We have many good reasons to choose joy, and the example of Jesus to guide us. Unfortunately the circumstances of our lives will never be perfect, and if we wait for that, we will never take the first step to choosing joy. But there is more than enough reason for choosing joy right now if we consider the great gift of salvation we have been given. And when we recognize and seize this truth, our joy will overflow to others as we share it with them.

Memory Verse

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

Luke 2:10 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs:

Challenge: Take these three steps: choose joy, start now and share it with someone, before Christmas Day.

