

Small Group Discussion Guide — May 23, 2021

- Series: if/then
 - Sermon: Cultivate Joy
 - Scripture: Nehemiah 8:10, Revelation 21: 3-6
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FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK

How did your perspective of your eternal destination affect your thinking and actions this week?

CONNECT

1. What stood out to you from this past week's service, and why?
2. What brings you great joy no matter what? How is that joy different from happiness?

ENGAGE

1. Read Nehemiah 8:10. What were the people instructed to do and why? Why would Ezra tell the people not to grieve?
2. Read Revelation 21:3-4. What distinguishes the new earth from the one we now inhabit? How can knowing this give us joy in the here and now?
3. Read Revelation 21:5-6. Which of these words of assurance mean the most to you right now and why?

APPLY

1. What is something hard in your life that was turned to joy because of your relationship with Jesus? Or, what suffering have you endured that was turned to joy because of Jesus? How would you explain that to someone who is new to faith or hasn't yet come to faith?
2. What is something that gives you fear or causes you to worry right now, that steals your joy? How can you apply the statement "if (since) the resurrection is true, then _____" to that fear/worry to alleviate it?

PRAYER

Gracious and loving Father, you are the Alpha and Omega, and your promises are true. You are our joy in this life as well as in the life to come. Help us to keep our eyes focused on you Lord, instead of the momentary highs and lows of this life, so that we may know your goodness and experience the joy that comes only from you. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen

GOING DEEPER

1. What are ways that you can “enter Jesus” more deeply this week?
2. How does praising God alone or in a gathering of Christians change us? What form of praise (singing, reading psalms, worship, prayer, other) increases your joy? How can you add more praise to your day?

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 5:19

Colossians 1:17

Revelation 21:4-5

Psalms 16:11

Isaiah 12:2-3

1 Peter 1: 21

QUOTATIONS

“Joy is our portion in his fellowship. Joy goes with confidence and creativity. It is his joy, and that is not a small joy or a repressed joy - it is a robust joy.”

Dallas Willard

“An exhausted culture needs an alternative to itself, not an echo of itself.”

Carey Nieuwhof

“To give oneself to hallowing God’s name as one’s life-task means that living, though never a joyride, will become increasingly a joy road.”

J.I. Packer