

Family Devotional

From January 8, 2017

Share: Go around the group and share one thing that makes you happy and why. This might be your favorite food or TV show, or seeing your best friend. Now let's see what Jesus says is His secret to experiencing joy!

Read: John 15:9-11

Reflect: What is joy and why is it so important?

In these verses Jesus is sharing with us the secret to being joyful in all circumstances. Can you pick out the two important keys to being joyful that Jesus gave us?

Why do you think our joy is complete when we remain in the Father's love and obey His commands?

Often people think that following Jesus means that life will be smooth and easy, but really, when we choose to follow Jesus, we have the best companion and leader to get us through all the ups and downs of life.

How is being joyful different from being happy?

Think back over the things you listed that make you happy. Happiness is a feeling of excitement when we get to do or experience things we enjoy. Joy is a more of a condition of the heart; when we are filled with contentment, confidence, and hope. We can have joy in the face of any circumstance, because our joy comes from Jesus not what is going on around us.

Read: Hebrews 12:1-2

Jesus is a wonderful example of this. He considered it joy to face the cross for us, not because it filled Him with the feeling of happiness, but because He knew that by following the Father's command we would be able to experience the same kind of love that He had known from the Father.

Just like Jesus reminded us in our first reading, it is a lot easier to live in joy when we choose to keep our focus on God and not the craziness of life around us. We can bring all the things that make us sad or confused to the feet of Jesus and hand them over to Him. He doesn't ask us to carry them or fix them on our own. We can find joy when we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

Remember: Work together as a family to memorize/meditate on Psalm 85:4 this week.

Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you.

Ideas: Write this passage down and hang it on the refrigerator. Say it together as a family during meal time each day. Write it on a chalk or white board and erase a couple of words each day until you can say it by memory.

Respond: "Dear Jesus, thank you for showing us what it looks like to find our joy in God our Father. Help us to find confidence, hope and contentment no matter what our circumstances are by keeping our attention on you.....Amen!"