



Small Group Discussion Guide December 16, 2018

Sermon Title:

“Joy in a Joy-Stealing World”

Sermon Text: Luke 2:1-15

Scripture Reading: Psalm 94:16-19

Leader: *Please allow a moment for introductions/visiting. Have someone offer a brief prayer inviting God to speak and lead using the group’s discussion.*

Getting Started:

How have you experienced Christmas joy so far this Advent season? What experiences have you had or witnessed that were joy-stealers? Do the latter experiences seem to outnumber the former?

Discussion:

1. The pastor noted a difference between joy and happiness. Why is joy not considered an emotion? See James 1:2-3, what insight does this verse give us about the difference?
2. **JOY responds to wrongs with right (Mt 1:18-19)** What do you think Joseph felt after finding out Mary was pregnant? What does his response tell us about the kind of man he was? Have you ever been wronged in such a substantial way? How did you respond? Why does a right response to a wrong produce joy?
3. **JOY views inconveniences as opportunity (vs 1-5)** Life, others, satan—they all have a way of interrupting special moments. How do you cope with the inconveniences that come your way? Do you grumble? With grace?
4. **JOY handles challenges constructively (vs 6-7)** No father or mother wants to lay their newborn in a feeding trough. How would you have handled the situation if you were Joseph/Mary? Do you naturally look for creative or constructive solutions, or do you easily give in to the frustration of difficulties?
5. **JOY meets fears with faith (vs 8-15)** Consider the Christmas story, especially the sermon passages, and name all the fears that might have been raised. Does faith erase the events that cause fear? What does faith do? Read Isa 41:10 and Romans 8:15, what do they have to say about fear in our lives?
6. Look carefully at the four points again. Which one do you need to focus on the most? How will an improvement in that area help increase your joy?

Closing:

Close by sharing prayer requests. Pray for each another and for the needs that were shared.

***Have a great third week of Advent, a week of joy.
GO SHARE JESUS!***