

Week 1 | Every Family Needs a Joy Plan



BOTTOM LINE

Everyone needs a plan for joy.



GOAL OF THE GROUP

True joy is found in the presence of God and choosing Jesus. Form an intentional plan for building habits that create joy in our relationships.



SCRIPTURE

Psalm 16:11, Philippians 4:4, and Nehemiah 8:10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Joy is a magnet and people are naturally drawn to joyful people. To get started this week, share ways you experience joy
 - Do you have a video you've watched recently that made you laugh out loud or just brought you a lot of joy? Watch 1 or 2 together. (Ex: Baby laughs at paper: [youtube.com/watch?v=RP4abiHdQpc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP4abiHdQpc))
 - Share about a moment when you experienced the kind of joy that is difficult to put into words.
 - Who is the most joyful person you know? What do you believe is their source?
2. Read Psalm 16:11 **"You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."** and Discuss:
 - a. This scripture tells us that joy is found in God's presence. Where or in whom have you looked for joy and not found it, or been disappointed when it didn't last? (Ex: job, money, pleasure, Netflix, a relationship, etc.)
 - b. Happiness is a feeling. Joy is a choice. Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. Read Philippians 4:4 **"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"** and Discuss:
 - a. Did you know that the author Paul was in prison when he wrote this? Paul believed and modeled for us that joy comes from choosing Jesus. Can you think of a time when you felt so depleted, empty, or sad, and how Jesus brought you joy in the ways only He can?
 - b. What are some of the likely joy killers in your home or relationships? (Ex: stress, calendar, kids' behavior, etc.)
 - c. Do you picture God/Jesus as joyful? Why or why not?
4. Read Nehemiah 8:10 **"The joy of the Lord is your strength."** and Discuss:
 - a. From "Desiring God" by John Piper – "It's a remarkable point delivered to Nehemiah and a people who were ravaged by war, weakened by insecurities, and constantly reminded of their own fragility. This is where we find our strength: for life, for pain, for trials, for marriage, for child-raising, for everything. The strength we need for this life is found in the essential joy of God."
 - b. When we believe God is the source of joy (not our circumstances), we can begin to make choices in our everyday lives to let His joy overflow INTO our circumstances and relationships. In your own life, what circumstances could you release in exchange for God's joy and strength?
5. Pray as a Group: "Lord, YOU are the giver of joy, the source of the full and abundant life that we all long for. We confess that we sometimes look to other sources for our joy... forgive us for when we have looked to our jobs, our spouses, our kids, or our circumstances to fill a role that only You can. Draw us into your presence – help us to choose time with you to fill our hearts and renew our joy. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

WHEN JOY IS
A HABIT,
LOVE IS A
REFLEX.
~Bob Goff



TRY THIS

Everyone needs a joy plan. We know how habits have the power to change us, and habits form through repetition. Did you know that after 30 days of a habit, your brain begins to rewire? And after 60 days, a new pathway is fully formed in your brain. We have to build habits that create joy in our relationships! Bob Goff says, "When joy is a habit, love is a reflex." Brainstorm ideas for how you can intentionally pursue and encourage opportunities for more joy in your home and relationships. Create a list and choose one to implement this week.

More resources:

The 4 Habits of Joy Filled Marriages | Marcus Warner & Chris Coursey
This is Your Brain on Joy | Dr. Early Henslin