



Joy - April 24, 2016

Warm Up

Happiness and joy, believed by most to be synonymous... but little could be further from the truth. The book of Philippians was penned by a man who was, at the moment of its writing, suffering untold troubles and trials. Paul was confined in a Roman dungeon, beaten regularly, and chained to one of his guards, awaiting death for the unthinkable crime of receiving the good news of salvation through Christ, and the desire that all might know his amazing savior. As he awaited his execution, he not only found purpose and meaning for the circumstances he was experiencing, he demonstrated incredible faithfulness, and did so with an attitude of unshakable joy!

Into The Bible

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

- Philippians 1:3-6

- If “happiness” is about what happens to you, and “joy” is about what happens in you, explain why joy is a choice. How do we “learn” joy in the midst of the things that are happening to us?
- Why do you think God used the story of Paul, who was in prison awaiting execution, and whose trials were anything but “light and momentary suffering” to teach us about joy? What must change in our perspectives in order for us to see our own trials in that same light?
- Our circumstances can be defined as the circle in which we decide to stand. What kind of decisions can you make about where you will stand, and what can you do to help assure that you follow-through on those decisions?

Application

Ask two people who know you best, and whom you trust, to help you assess whether your life is being controlled by what happens to you, or by what is happening in you. Listen to their observations, and with their help, develop a plan to better align your life with the higher principles that produce a life characterized by joy.

Prayer Focus : Summer is on it's way. With summer comes vacations and family trips. Pray for the safety of our families as they travel and for our children and teens to stay connected to God during the summer months.

Continue to pray for FC families that are dealing illness and hardship. Pray for God to bring healing and provision both for our families and for provision for all that FC has planned for the summer months.

PJR was to have cardiac procedure last week, however due some missteps, his procedure is not scheduled for May 2. Please keep him in your prayers.