



# 2

## A Daily Pursuit

?

**WHEN  
CAN YOU  
REMEMBER  
BEING  
INCREDIBLY  
THIRSTY?**

### The **POINT** >

**Deepen your relationship with God by  
spending time with Him every day.**

### > PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

<sup>5</sup> Let your graciousness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

<sup>6</sup> Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things.

<sup>9</sup> Do what you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.



# FOR LEADERS (15 minutes)

THE POINT // DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD BY SPENDING TIME WITH HIM EVERY DAY.

## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // PEOPLE

Our response to God's love is to remain pure in all aspects of life—with our bodies, thoughts, attitudes, actions, and speech—and He empowers us to obey His commands as we live by the Spirit.

## Message to Leaders

Though we all face difficulties in life, as followers of Christ, we have many reasons to rejoice. First and greatest, we have received the gift of salvation. Beyond this, we receive God's blessings every day as signs of His love and goodness. The world will tempt us to be discontent and to complain about our circumstances. However, in Christ we have all we need and more. Therefore, we're called to rejoice in Him, to protect our minds from thinking on things that are negative and false, and to devote our minds to what is true and honorable in God's sight. Our thinking is transformed as we spend time with Jesus in His Word every day.

## › Engage Option 1

Select two volunteers to come up front. Show photos of famous celebrities and important historical figures one at a time. Instruct students to guess the celebrity name along with a fact about that person. The student with the most correct guesses wins. Say, **"It can be a challenge to know someone you don't spend time with on a regular basis. If we want to know God, we should spend time with Him every day."**

## › Engage Option 2

Place objects around the room that would be essential in an emergency situation (e.g., food, water bottles, flashlights, etc.). Say, **"Just like we consider items such as food and water to be essential for living, we should see God's Word as essential to living a spiritual life with Him."**

## › Engage Option 3

Search the Internet for "Beautifully True Video - Desiring God." Play the video as you begin the session. Say, **"Spending time in God's Word every day helps us to know God more fully, so we can deepen our relationship with Him."**

**NOTE:** Always make sure you preview any video clip you show students and ensure it is appropriate for your church and ministry.



For **free online training** on how to lead a group visit **MinistryGrid.com/web/BibleStudiesForLife**  
For **free Midweek Options** for your group, visit **lifeway.com/BSFLsimplicityFall19**

## LEADER PACK ELEMENTS

If you have the optional Leader Pack, consider the following:

**ITEM 2:** As you begin the session, consider using the Session 2 poster to engage students in the point.



# THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

THE POINT // DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD BY SPENDING TIME WITH HIM EVERY DAY.



## THE SETTING

Paul established the church at Philippi on his second missionary journey. Because there weren't enough Jews in Philippi to constitute a synagogue, some devout women met outside the city at a place of prayer (Acts 16:13). Paul preached to them there, and Lydia and others became believers. Opposition to the young church arose immediately. Paul and Silas were illegally beaten and imprisoned, but God miraculously delivered them. Later, Paul wrote to the Philippians to thank them for supporting his continued ministry, to tell them of the hardships he faced in Rome, and to encourage them to remain unified.

### FACT:

Water is one of the most valuable resources on earth, but it costs us very little. The average cost in the US is about \$2 for 1000 gallons—that's 5 gallons for a penny.<sup>1</sup>

I have a friend, Jon, who is an avid outdoorsman, and one of his favorite activities is sea kayaking. Recently, when he was on a trip along the coast of Hawaii, a storm swept in and dragged him out to sea. For 24 hours, John struggled to stay alive as 20-foot waves pounded his little boat, capsizing him repeatedly. When the storm finally subsided, his struggle was only beginning. For three days, he faced blistering sun and sharks seeking to turn over his kayak as rescue planes searched for a tiny dot in the vast Pacific ocean. When they found him 130 miles offshore, he was delirious from dehydration.

We all do a pretty good job of taking care of our physical condition, but we're often not as sensitive to our spiritual needs—too many of us experience spiritual dehydration. The health of our souls depends on drinking from the water that comes only from a relationship with Jesus. Without this, we'll have symptoms of spiritual dehydration: spiritual, emotional, or relational pain; irritability; and believing things that aren't true.

But when we realize we're dry and turn to God, He's happy to replenish us with living water. The cure is as simple as a time of prayer and praise to the One who keeps us going. We need Jesus. Every day.



# IMPART (30 minutes)

THE POINT // DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD BY SPENDING TIME WITH HIM EVERY DAY.

## PHILIPPIANS 4:4-5

*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your graciousness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.*

### PHILIPPIANS 4:4-5

Even in the face of life's toughest challenges, we don't have to lose our joy. Here's why—joy isn't rooted in our circumstances. Joy is found only in God. Many times we think joy and happiness are the same thing. However, this isn't the case. Happiness is based on what "happens" in our lives and is the product of chance or good fortune. Joy, on the other hand, is based on an eternal perspective, and even when tough things happen, we know our relationship with Jesus is secure, and we're eternally blessed.

Paul wasn't writing this letter from a club chair in a trendy coffee shop. He was in prison. Some of the Philippians surely remembered when Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned in their city, yet the two evangelists spent the night praying and singing hymns of praise (Acts 16:11-12, 22-25). Where did Paul's joy come from? It came from Jesus. Joy isn't something that happens by accident. It is a daily decision to choose joy in Christ—regardless of our circumstances.

Because of sin's curse upon creation, we are going to face hardships. In fact, Jesus warned us we're going to face trouble (John 16:33). If we focus on the difficulties, we'll be miserable and miss out on the peace and joy available in God. However, when we focus on the good things God gives—and if we pay attention, we'll find there are more than we realize—and ultimately on God Himself, we'll find there are plenty of reasons to rejoice. As Christians, we can rejoice because:

**Leader:** Ask students to share an experience that made it difficult to be joyful. Consider sharing your own story.

- **The King rules over creation.**
- **He has defeated sin and death.**
- **Our eternity doesn't depend on us—victory has been won in Christ.**

When we focus on the tough things in our lives, we tend to be irritable and difficult for others to be around. However, when we choose joy in Christ, God's grace shines through us and that joy is passed onto others in our lives. Paul said it twice—Rejoice in the Lord always! It's vitally important, and it is God's gift to His people.

### DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE (P. 14)

- 1** When was the last time you really rejoiced over something?
- 2** What's your favorite way of expressing praise to God?



# IMPART

THE POINT // DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD BY SPENDING TIME WITH HIM EVERY DAY.

## PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

*Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

### PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

The antidote for worry comes as we center our lives on Christ—as we pursue His kingdom and His righteousness, we can trust God to provide everything we need. In this passage, Paul gives us a key to centering our focus on Christ with three words:

- **Prayer:** Prayer seems like the obvious thing to do, but it is often one of the most neglected disciplines of the Christians life. Prayer is more than communication with God—it is communion with Him. Prayer includes an attitude of worship and reverence in which we come before the throne of God. Through Christ, we have access to the Creator of the universe who hears our prayers. However, we're often too busy or too preoccupied with other things to pray. Here's the thing—when something is truly important to us, we make time. When we don't pray, it's because it isn't truly important to us.
- **Petition:** Petition is a specific type of prayer, specifically, asking God to meet our needs. When worry steals our joy, we should beg God to provide what we need and give us a heart of trust.
- **Thanksgiving:** Thanksgiving is another type of prayer we're called to express. For His children, God withholds no good thing (Ps. 84:11). We all have many blessings from God for which to be thankful, and if we take the time to reflect on those and cultivate an attitude of gratefulness, we'll find our joy grows.

**VERSE 6:** It's important to understand that worry indicates a lack of trust in God. When we strive to live in obedience, but find ourselves worrying, it may be because we fail to understand the Lord's purposes, and we aren't living by faith in His wisdom and sovereignty. Further, if we are living in disobedience, we'll never experience the peace God has for us, and we'll likely worry continually about the consequences of sin.

The key to replacing worry with peace is to filter everything through a spirit of prayer. Not just the big things, but in everything, pray! God wants us to experience joy and peace, and if we neglect prayer, we'll miss out on these blessings. By simply trusting in Him and making prayer a priority, we'll find God works wonders in our lives. Paul experienced joy and peace even in a Roman prison cell. When we live prayerfully by faith in God, we'll find these blessings are available to us as well.

*Joy isn't something that happens by accident. It is a daily decision to choose joy in Christ—regardless of our circumstances. #BSFLsimplicity*



### DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE (P. 15)

- 3** What are some obstacles to experiencing the joy and peace of God?
- 4** Why do we often neglect to bring the little things before God?
- 5** How is prayer the answer to worry?



## PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9

*Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things. Do what you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.*

### PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9

Everything year at Thanksgiving, my family travels from Baltimore (where we currently live) to Birmingham to visit family. We have a large SUV, so you would think there'd be plenty of space to carry everything we need. However, as a family of eight, we've found it's next to impossible to fit 10 days worth of luggage into the back cargo space. Inevitably, we have to get rid of a few nonessentials to make room for what's necessary.

When we pray daily, expressing dependence, gratitude, and praise to God, our focus is centered where it needs to be—on Jesus. However, when our minds are crowded by all the wrong things, it's impossible to remain focused on Christ. We have to get rid of the junk that crowds out the things of God. We carry around a lot of unnecessary baggage, and our lives suffer for it. But if we're willing to get rid of the meaningless things in our lives, and instead, fill our minds with His Word, we'll find God replaces worthless and even harmful attitudes and perspectives with a much healthier experience.

Paul has called us to center our minds on things that are:

- |                              |                                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ➤ True, not false            | ➤ Lovely, not ugly               |
| ➤ Honorable, not disgraceful | ➤ Commendable, not despicable    |
| ➤ Just, not unfair           | ➤ Morally excellent, not corrupt |
| ➤ Pure, not obscene          | ➤ Praiseworthy, not shameful     |

**VERSE 8:** "True" refers specifically to the wisdom found in God's Word. "Just" refers to those things which are right in God's sight and are a picture of the righteousness Christ will one day establish when He judges the world. "Commendable" refers to thoughts and behaviors thought of highly by God.

The world pushes us to think on all the negative things in this list—false, disgraceful, obscene, and so on. However, when we think on the things that are good, taking "every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5), God will transform not only our minds, but our entire lives. Then we will be godly examples, living out what we have learned. God created us in His image to reflect His glory to others, and when we live out the good truths of Philippians 4, we embody the very character of Christ and make a difference in the lives of others.

Furthermore, when we focus on and trust in Christ, we experience joy and peace ourselves. These are natural by-products in the lives of those who spend time with God every day. So, let's set our minds on God. Let's pray about everything in our lives, big and small. Then we'll experience the good blessings God desires for His children.

### DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE (P. 15)

- 6** How does the world tempt us to think on negative things?
- 7** Which of Paul's commands in verses 4-9 are easiest for you? Which are more difficult?
- 8** How can we focus our minds on the things that are pleasing to God?





# LIVE IT OUT (10 minutes)

THE POINT // DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD BY SPENDING TIME WITH HIM EVERY DAY.



GOD  
JESUS  
HOLY SPIRIT  
BIBLE  
SALVATION  
CREATION  
CHURCH

## PEOPLE

FAMILY  
COMMUNITY  
& WORLD

## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // PEOPLE

*Our response to God's love is to remain pure in all aspects of life—with our bodies, thoughts, attitudes, actions, and speech—and He empowers us to obey His commands as we live by the Spirit.*

Though we all face difficulties in life, as followers of Christ, we have many reasons to rejoice. First and greatest, we have received the gift of salvation. Beyond this, we receive God's blessings every day as signs of His love and goodness. The world will tempt us to be discontent and to complain about our circumstances. However, in Christ we have all we need and more. Therefore, we're called to rejoice in Him, to protect our minds from thinking on things that are negative and false, and to devote our minds to what is true and honorable in God's sight. Our thinking is transformed as we spend time with Jesus in His Word every day.

## > CHRIST

Our relationship with Jesus depends on our choosing to engage with Him continually—every day!

### PRAY

Make it a point every day this week to engage with God in prayer.

### GRATEFULNESS

Pay special attention to the blessings God has given you and express gratitude for those good things.

### READ

Get into God's Word daily. Use the devos or another reading plan to help you focus daily on God's Word. Journal the things God is teaching you.

### WORSHIP

Make sure not only to focus on the things God does, but who He is. Express your praise to Him.

### DEPENDENCE

Ask God to provide for your needs and ask Him to help you grow in trusting Him.



# LIVE IT OUT

THE POINT // DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD BY SPENDING TIME WITH HIM EVERY DAY.

## > COMMUNITY

Our thinking is influenced in a big way by the people we spend time with. When we allow worldly values to drive our thinking, we will struggle. However, when we choose to engage intentionally with other Christ-followers, we'll grow in godly thinking and living.

**9** Partner with others in your group to support and encourage each other in your daily prayer and reading.

**10** How will you do this? Be specific.



## > CULTURE

Though we are called out from among the world, God has called us to reach the world. And as we think and live differently, others will take notice, giving us the opportunity to share about the difference Christ makes in our lives.

**11** How will you leverage the following to impact lost friends?

Joy in Christ

Peace from God

Prayer, trust, and gratitude

