

“Joy In The Everyday: Widening The Lens”

Growth Group Guide

June 14, 2026

WELCOME *(Connecting with each other)*

Cover one eye with your hand. Form your other hand into a “scope” and put it over the seeing eye. What do you see? How much can you see? Would it be frustrating to see like that all the time? How good is it that God gives us the ability to see things better, more clearly, from His perspective, especially in regard to how we see others? Discuss.

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER *(Connecting with God)*

Open in prayer, praising the Spirit that He gives us the ability to look more fully at those around us, to see and care for their needs by His power.

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 NIV. Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.

2 Corinthians 4:5 ESV. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.

Galatians 5:22-23 ESV. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...

WORD *(Letting God speak to us)*

1. We can summarize the main theme of Philippians 1 as: to live is Christ, to die is gain. In your own words, how would you describe what it means that Jesus is your life and “to live is Christ?”
2. When you’ve seen disagreements or divisions, how have you seen them handled? How successful was that approach?
3. **Read Philippians 2:1-2.** There was likely a disagreement causing division in the Philippian church. Look at v1. Where does Paul start in trying to address it? How is this different or the same from other ways you’ve seen used? Why is it important for Paul to start here?
4. In these verse, Paul is describing characteristics of the Philippians’ spiritual identity in Jesus. These are part of our identity as well. What traits do you find in these verses? How do they give you joy?
5. Did you notice the words “being” and “having” in v2? How is that made possible? How do these things affect the way we live in community with one another?
6. Paul asks the Philippians to complete his joy by living the way he asks. What do you think about this? Is it fleshly or spiritual? Discuss.
7. **Read Philippians 2:3-4 and Galatians 5:19-21.** Do you see the parallels? Besides the fleshly qualities Paul mentions in Philippians 2:3-4, do you think other fleshly qualities from the list in Galatians 5:19-21 were impacting the Philippians’ relationships? Discuss.

8. The biblical term for relying upon ourselves instead of God is the flesh. Why do you think we choose to live out of the flesh instead of the Spirit? Do you think Paul has made a convincing enough case to shed fleshly living in favor of living out of what we have in Christ? Discuss. If not, what do you think Paul should add or clarify?
9. Paul has tied the choice between the ability to live by the Spirit or out of the flesh to how we are able to see, love, and serve others. Why do you think that is? Why is this important to understand?
10. Do you think Paul is telling us to ignore ourselves and only focus on others basically becoming Christian doormats for others to walk all over? Why or why not? If not, what do you think he’s really trying to encourage us to do? What would that look like practically?

WALK *(Living out God’s purposes)*

- ✓ **One Big Idea: Being in Christ empowers us to look beyond our own needs alone and also consider the well-being of others.** There is a true story of a minister who desired to see people with God’s eyes. He went to a park and prayed, “Lord, let me see the people around me with your eyes.” As he sat, the Lord answered his prayer and he began to weep. Jesus’ love flooded him for each person he saw that day. This happened on more than one occasion. He became a more engaged, compassionate, merciful minister during that season. What would it look like for you to pray that same prayer? Consider going to a park, a swimming pool, any public place, and sit with God as you people watch with this prayer in your heart. See what God will do IN you and THROUGH you as you experience His love and joy for them.
- ✓ Consider your answer to question 8. Share your thoughts with God.

WORLD *(Embracing God’s heart for others)*

School is out!! Hooray for all the students, teachers and school staff who completed the school year (parents too!). As our families and community head into summer break, we can be praying for them. Some have plans for camps, camping, vacation trips, sleeping in, no homework, etc. Some share concern over their practical and emotional needs that this change will bring. Here are a few prayer points: Safe travels, spiritually nurturing camp experiences and vacations, food and structure needs, rest and refreshment, fun and joy! Remember all the camps being run in our area too (Child Evangelism Fellowship, Camp Harlow, Northwest Christian Convention, Grove Christian Camps, VBS’s and so many others). Pray for all the staff, volunteers, and attendees and for each camp to have the impact God has for it and all participants. To God be the glory in our hearts and lives in every summer adventure this year! And, may many children, teens, and adults come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. “For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you.” 2 Corinthians 9:10 (NLT)

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