

Applying It In My LifeGroup time - 20 minutes

1. What is the relationship between circumstances, prayer, answers to prayer and joy? How can our joy be complete? What does Jesus say about love in this section? In what ways have you experienced this kind of love?
2. How have you personally experienced hostility or even scorn because of your faith in Jesus? As followers of Christ, why should we not be fearful or anxious about the prospect of persecution when Jesus is absent from this earth? How can we experience joy in the midst of persecution?
3. How has Jesus overcome the world? How does that impact our lives as followers of Christ? In what ways are we also overcomers of the world because of what Jesus did for us on the cross? Where would you like to see victory in your own life over the ways of the world?

Prayer TimeGroup time - 15 minutes

Praise Jesus for being the way, the truth and the life. Thank the Father for sending the Holy Spirit and keeping you safe in the midst of persecution. Pray that you will be able to take heart and find courage and hope in times of trouble because of what God has done and continues to do for you.

Finish your prayer time by praying for the needs of those in your *Growth Group*. Take a few minutes to share prayer requests. Ask someone in the group to record your prayers so that in future weeks you can see where God is answering your prayers.

BEFORE I GO
Surpassing Joy

The Gift of Joy

John 16:20-22

- God is JOYFUL.
- Our joy increases as we WORSHIP our God.
- We need each other to REJOICE.

The Gift of Prayer

John 16:23-30

- What matters most is our RELATIONSHIP with God.

The Gift of Peace

John 16:31-33

- Jesus gives a peace in our hearts that is not CONNECTED to the circumstances going on in our lives.

- Peace comes when we TRUST God.

GROWTH GROUP HOMEWORK

Week of February 8-12, 2016

Getting StartedGroup time - 15 minutes

1. We encourage groups to plan a social together. It could be a meal out together, a fun night at the theatre, a bowling night, or something as easy as a potluck dinner prior to group. Talk about it as a group; agree on an activity and a date. **HAVE SOME FUN TOGETHER!**
2. What is your greatest triumph or joy? What would you need to experience great joy today? What do you think the difference is between the love, peace, and joy that Christ offers as opposed to what the world offers?

FOR GROWTH GROUP TIME

Getting Into God's WordGroup time - 40 minutes

Read John 16.16-33 (In preparation to answer questions)

1. What was it that the disciples did not understand about Jesus' ministry and future path? Why do you think the disciples were confused about Jesus' comments? (17-18) What factors contributed to the recurring theme of the disciples misunderstanding of some of Jesus' teachings regarding His mission and purpose?

2. Why did Jesus forewarn the disciples about what was going to come in the near future: His imminent departure; and their subsequent persecution? How did the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus clarify His earlier teachings?
3. Jesus says that when the disciples mourn, the world will rejoice and when the disciples rejoice, the world will mourn. (20-22) What will cause the disciples to mourn and the world to rejoice? How did Jesus' death and resurrection usher in a whole new world for the followers of Christ?
4. Jesus introduces a new concept when He says His disciples will ask the Father "in His name." What do you believe Jesus meant by this? Why had the disciples not asked for anything in Jesus' name before?
5. How do Jesus' words about the character of the Father and His actions towards us challenge the way that God is often characterized – even in the church? How did the disciples respond to Jesus' teaching about the Father at the end of this section? (29) At this point, why was it so crucial for the disciples to be able to glimpse at least a bit of the truth of Jesus' teaching?