

SERMON: The Joy of Growing In Christ
SERIES: Philippians: Living In Joy
SPEAKER: Pastor Brady

April 29, 2018

CONNECT (5-10 minutes): Help the members of the group grow in relationships with one another so all people in the group know they matter. Spend some time discovering what is happening in the lives of your group members. Share how God has been revealing himself in each other's lives.

REVIEW (15-20 minutes): Use this time to review the passage and the sermon outline (see below).

Note: this is a great opportunity to share leadership.

Use these simple questions to review the sermon/passage or for if you don't have much time:

1. What does this passage teach you about God? About us?
2. How does this passage point us to the gospel? How does it challenge you? Change you?

SCRIPTURE:

Philippians 2:12-30.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

¹⁴ Do all things without grumbling or disputing, ¹⁵ that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶ holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. ¹⁷ Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸ Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

¹⁹ I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. ²⁰ For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. ²¹ For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. ²² But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. ²³ I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, ²⁴ and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

²⁵ I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, ²⁶ for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. ²⁹ So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, ³⁰ for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me..

SERMON OUTLINE:

- I. How we grow in Christ.
- II. The Signs of growth in Christ.
- III. The joy of growing in Christ.

GROW (45-60 minutes): Use this time to go deeper with your group.

Use these questions to discuss the sermon/passage:

1. How we grow in Christ is one of the most important things for a Christian to understand. How does Philippians 2:12-13 seem to create a tension between “resting in grace” and “striving for obedience?” Do you tend to lean more towards one of these over the other?

If time: Read Ephesians 2:8-10; John 15:4; 1 Corinthians 15:10. How do these scriptures also speak to this tension of “resting in grace” and “striving for obedience?”

2. Our union with Christ means that we are both in Christ and that Christ is in you.

IN CHRIST: Christ represents us, secures us, becomes our identity.

CHRIST IN YOU: Christ is living out his life through you, changing your will and choices, illuminating you.

How does understanding your union with Christ help you to make sense of the tension of Philippians 2:12-13 (“resting in grace” and “striving for obedience”)?

If time: Read Luke 22:41-44. How did Jesus himself both rest in God’s loving grace while striving for obedience? Can you think of other examples from Jesus’ life of this balance?

3. Your sanctification is a partnership with both God and the church. “work out [plural verb] your own salvation [singular noun]”). Does this surprise you? Bother you? Encourage you? Why/How? In what ways can you as a small group continue to help each other to “work out your salvation?”

4. In Philippians 2:14-18 Paul returns to the theme of unity. Unity is a sign that the life of Christ is being worked out in our church community. As you look over these verses together discuss a) how do these verses describe a Christ-like attitude/mindset? b) how do these verses point back to the way Jesus lived his life as seen in Philippians 2:5-11?

5. Would you say you are living a “joy filled” life? Why or why not- does your joy hinge on something situational or relational?

6. Joy comes from the loving acceptance of God and others. When we know we are accepted we experience delight. Without this joy we will not grow in Christ. Have you felt the joy of being accepted in Christ? In the church? What is one way you can help others to experience the joy of being accepted?

Pray: Praise and thank God for union with Christ and the joy that it brings. Ask God to help you fight for joy by remembering how loved you are.