



## A CALL FOR SERIOUS JOY

If you have a pattern of having someone share their *Story of Faith* (life before Jesus, encountering Jesus, life since/lately with Jesus) and/or sharing *Evidences of God's grace*, begin with that, followed by a time of thankful prayer for Christ's work in the individual's life and/or the grace in your lives.

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### OPENING COMMENT

The Bible urges us to live a joy-filled life. It calls us to some serious joy. But how is that possible with such reason for sorrow surrounding us? What does Jesus mean when He says that our sorrow will turn to joy and how do we ensure that we experience it?

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### READ THE TEXT: John 16.16-24

<sup>16</sup>"A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me."

<sup>17</sup>So some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and, 'because I am going to the Father'?" <sup>18</sup>So they were saying, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We do not know what he is talking about." <sup>19</sup>Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, 'A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me'? <sup>20</sup>Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. <sup>21</sup>When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. <sup>22</sup>So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. <sup>23</sup>In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. <sup>24</sup>Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the things that bring you the most joy in life? Share a couple of your most joyful moments in the past year.
2. Share how your faith in Jesus has sustained you through a time of difficulty.
3. Why is it so critical that our joy centre around Jesus rather than have faith in Jesus as one among many sources of joy?
4. If rejoicing is not in the regular diet of your Christian life, what is it that seems to be stealing your joy? What's the roadblock?
5. How does the gospel neither minimize very real suffering and sorrow on the one hand and also provide a cure, hope, and perspective on the other? (Hebrews 12:1-3 may be helpful)
6. Have you ever wondered what it means to pray in Jesus' name? Have you ever seen "wacky" interpretations of that?
7. What do you find helpful and clarifying about these explanations of what it means to pray in Jesus' name and why: *Coming before God through faith in Jesus; Approaching God on the merits of Jesus; Praying as Jesus would pray in the same circumstances; Our asking and receiving are a route to receiving joy?*

## CONCLUSION

In prayer — by asking and receiving in Jesus' name — we get joy. In the gospel — by believing in who Jesus is and His finished work — we get joy. *And no one will take your joy from you.*

## SHARE & PRAY

- Share how you can pray for each other in light of what this text has impressed upon you.
- Pray that you would grow in the unparalleled joy found in Jesus in the midst of any and all circumstances.
- Ask the group how they intend to get involved in the planting of new campuses in the coming months (going, staying, serving, giving, etc.) and pray that God would give us much grace as a church to fulfill the work He has called us to together.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, for the areas of growth and grace you are seeking, and the needs among you.

*\*We are making a video as a snapshot of our church. We would love to have brief iPhone video footage of your Life Group. Capture something and send it to [adamschellenberg@gmail.com](mailto:adamschellenberg@gmail.com) via dropbox or Google Drive by May 29.*

