

Youth (Grades 6 – 12)

Week #1

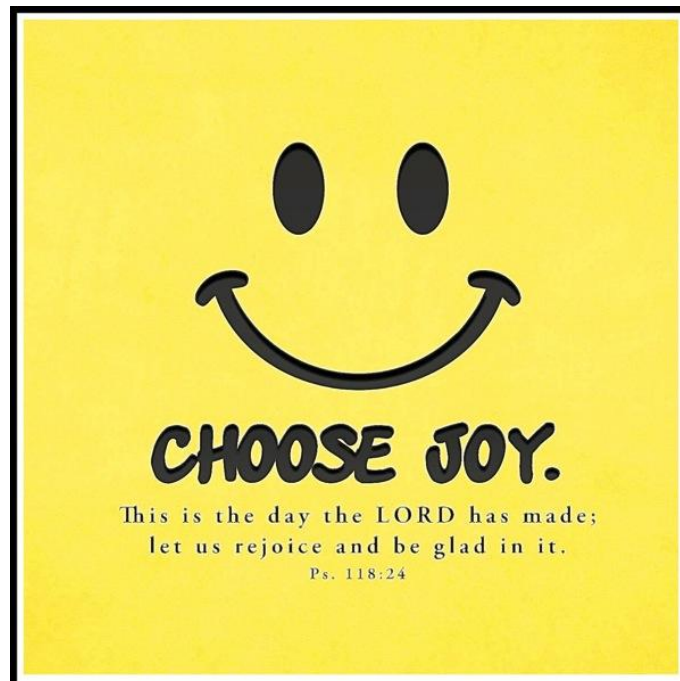
Work on September 20-26th

Choose Joy!



Read Philippians 2:1-4

2 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.



Discussion:

1.) Life can be difficult. Let's be honest, as teens you face a lot of pressure. Pressure to get good grades. Pressure to perform at high levels in athletic contests. Pressure from peers to make choices you may disagree with. It can seem like the weight of the world is on your shoulders. Have you ever experienced comfort? From a friend? A family member? A teacher? How did that person comfort you?

2.) Have you ever experienced comfort from knowing Jesus? If so, explain.

3.) Have you ever expressed (or shown) comfort to someone in need? If so, explain how so. How did it make you feel knowing you helped that person?

4.) What are some ways you can show comfort to others?

5.) What ways make you feel like you receive comfort?



Application:

1.) Keep an eye out for friends, family members, and others around you to see if they are having a rough time. You may notice this by their actions, their comments, their social media pages. Pray for them. Write down a few things you can do to show comfort to them and be there for them.

2.) Carry out your thoughts and reach out to that person (or people). Share your experiences.

Read Philippians 2:1-4 again:

Discussion:

- 1.) The apostle Paul says that one way to make his joy complete, or in today's world, to make the joy of other Christians' complete, is to be like-minded. What do you think it means to be "like-minded" with other Christians?

- 2.) Notice the world around us and how everyone seems to have their own opinion. Is it possible to have different opinions and views than other Christians and yet still be "like-minded?" How so?

- 3.) To experience true joy in your life, Paul goes on to say that you should do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. What do you think he meant by that? How does that bring joy in your life?

- 4.) "In humility value others above yourselves." Explain what you think humility is? How can you show humility in your personal life towards those around you?

5.) Lastly, in verse 4, Paul instructs us to not look towards our own interests but to the interests of others? Does this exemplify humility? If so, how? How does being more attentive to other people's interests bring joy in your life?

Application:

1.) There is an acronym for "JOY" that says, "Jesus first, Others second, Yourself last." Practice putting the things of Christ first in your life, then the interests of others, and then your own needs. Share an experience of how this brings a joyful feeling to you. Or, how can it produce joy?

Pray: God, you know my inner thoughts, interests, and wishes. Help me put your thoughts first and to be like-minded with people who love you. It's difficult in my world to put other people first, above myself, but show me ways that I can humble myself and truly be concerned with others instead of myself. Lastly, give me joy for living. Not just moments of happiness, but moments of true joy. Amen.