

# Joy



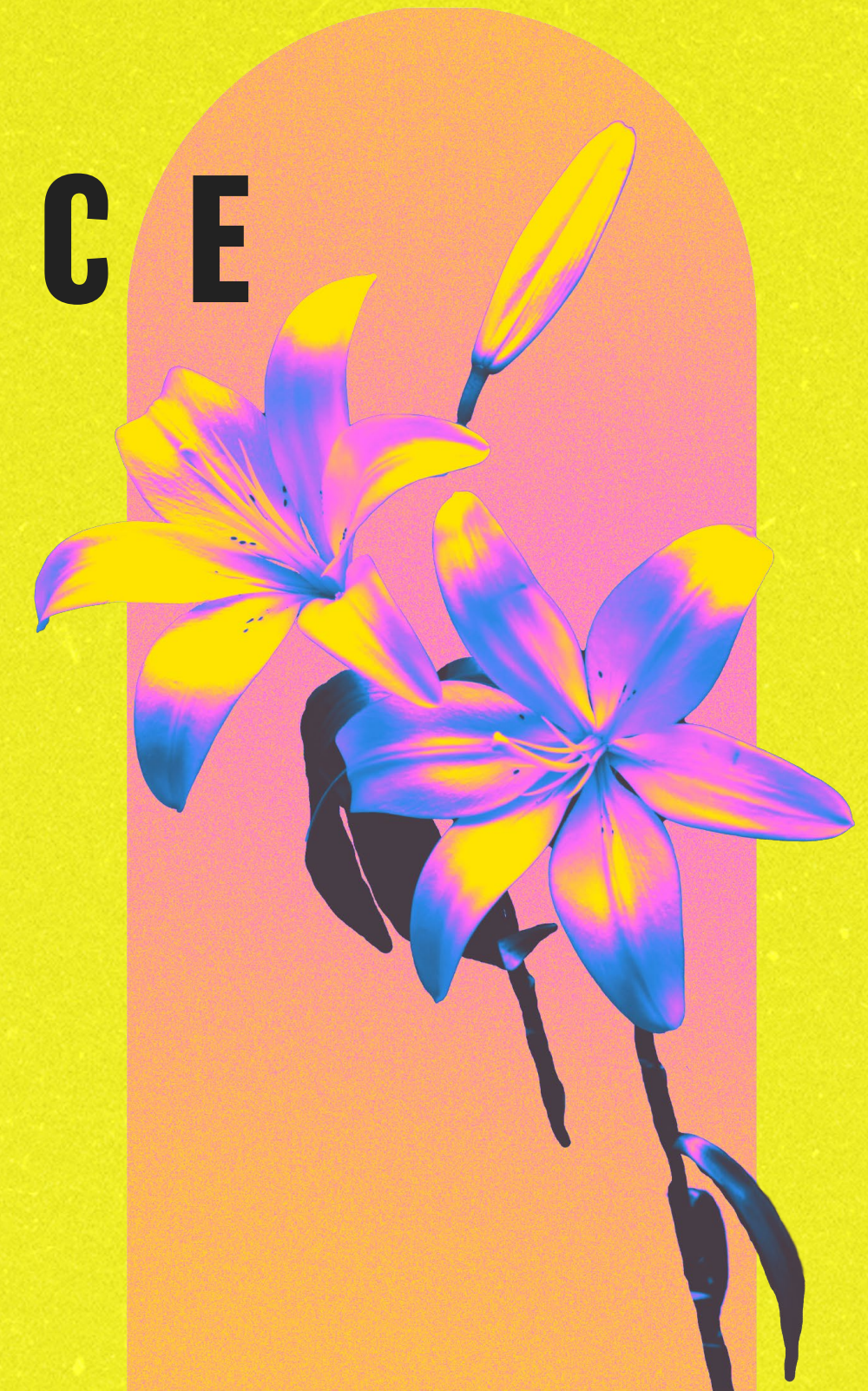
DISCOVERING JOY

THROUGH PHILIPPIANS

# SESSION 2: JOY IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCE

## SERIES OVERVIEW:

**“Joy. It’s not getting what you want; it’s appreciating what you have. Joy isn’t always the easiest choice or the obvious choice, but joy is a choice. The Apostle Paul said, “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice!” And his life is louder than his words. Paul writes his letter to the Philippians from a prison cell. You can choose joy anywhere, anytime, anyway!”**



**READ: PHILIPPIANS 1:1-2**

**UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT:**

Philippi was a Roman colony in Macedonia; its inhabitants were Roman citizens, and very few of them were Jews.

The apostle Paul established the church in Philippi on his second missionary tour (Acts 16:6-40); they became known for their devotion and generous support of Paul's ministry.

This letter was written some ten or twelve years after Paul's visit, and is full of deep affection for this Christian community.

Paul is writing this letter from prison in Rome, to a church community that is facing persecution from the Romans, as well as the threat of false doctrine and division.

**That Paul was writing this letter of encouragement to the Philippians whilst he himself was in prison is central to the theme of joy throughout this book. In just these first two verses, we find that:**

1. Joy is found in Jesus: the joy of the Lord is not based on external circumstances; it is something the world does not give and cannot take away.
2. Joy is a choice: the pursuit of joy is something that we choose.

## **D I S C U S S I O N**

**We can often turn joy into a destination – that “when x happens, then I will have joy” - rather than something that can be experienced at all times and in all circumstances.**

- In thinking about your own life, are there any “when-then” mentalities that are stopping you from experiencing joy in the now?
- Can you think of a time in your life when joy has come through an unexpected or undesired turn of events?
- Drawing from Sunday’s preach, scripture and your own experiences, what do you think or feel about the idea that joy is a choice?
- How might this shape the way that you live this week and in the weeks to come?

## **P R A C T I C A L A P P L I C A T I O N**

**To help you choose Joy, why not sign up to our Church Crawley Whatsapp daily reflections, as we walk verse-by-verse through the book of Phillipians. Each day we’ll be guided through the practice of listening, reflecting, responding, and resting in the Word of God — allowing space for the Holy Spirit to cultivate joy.**

## PRAY TO END

**“Holy Spirit, make my heart open to the word of God, make my heart open to goodness, make my heart open to the beauty of God every day.”**

**God, thank you for giving me constant access to your presence. Because you are always with me, I can experience true joy at all times. Although the joy you give isn't based on my circumstances, I don't always live a life marked by joy. Too often, instead of trusting you, I let my problems dictate my reactions. Please forgive me. Fill me with your joy and peace, so that by the power of your Holy Spirit, I may abound in hope at all times. Help me to live a life marked by undefeatable joy. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

