

Joy



DISCOVERING JOY

THROUGH PHILIPPIANS

SESSION 12: RISK-TAKERS FOR JOY

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 2:25 - 30

RISK IS SPELT FAITH

Epaphroditus was Paul's co-worker, initially sent by the church in Philippi to attend to Paul in Prison in Rome (journey of 787 miles), and then responsible for returning Paul's letter to the Philippians. In making this journey, he risked his life for the work of Christ. He went on to become the first Bishop of Philippi!

Risk or Opportunity?

- If Epaphroditus hadn't taken a risk in delivering Paul's letter to the Philippians, the church in Philippi – and now millions of bible-reading Christians since - would have never received this encouragement and teaching, which has gone on to edify and nurture the Church

DISCUSS

Can you think of a time when someone else's risk-taking has blessed or benefited you, or someone you know, either directly or indirectly? (Could be from scripture, from history, or from your own life)

DISCUSSION

“Waiting on the other side of the risk God is calling you to make is the Joy of Christ”

- Taking risks for the gospel might look like risking our reputation, risking rejection, failure, or our own comfort – but perhaps the greatest risk is taking no risks at all.
- Hebrews 11 speaks of the power of people’s faithful actions and risk-taking throughout the history of God’s people: people who have stepped out in faith to be peacemakers, grace-givers, truth-tellers, joy bringers...
- We may not always see the fruit of our risk-taking, but there is joy to be found in the process of stepping out in faith with Jesus. Through our obedience, we can find deeper intimacy.

DISCUSS

When was the last time you took a risk for the cause of Christ? What happened?

Is there anything that stirs in your Spirit when we talk about taking risks for the cause of Christ? Where is God offering you opportunities to step out in faith? What things are barriers to your risk-taking?

P R A Y

God of grace, we are sorry for the times when we have preferred our own comfort and safety over taking risks for the sake of your kingdom. We pray for a spirit of courage and joy as we seek to step out in faith.

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.