

# I'VE GOT THE

joy joy joy



## Ice Breakers

- What in life makes you happy?
- What brings you great joy?
- Are joy and happiness the same thing?

- Can you have joy when facing tough circumstances?

**NOTE:** Paul wrote one of the most joyous books in scripture while in prison. He had joy in horrible circumstances.

**JOY = quiet confident assurance of God's love and work in our life.**

- Can you have joy even when being mistreated by people?

## READ Philippians 1:3-10

(Remember, Paul is in prison as he wrote this book).

## HOW TO GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE or KEEP THE JOY WHEN FACING DIFFICULT PEOPLE:

### 1. Thank God for All and Pray for All.

#### READ Verses 3-4

- <sup>3</sup> I thank my God every time I remember you.  
<sup>4</sup> In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy

**NOTE:** For Paul to remember someone was to thank God for them and to pray for them.

Paul was writing this letter to Christians, some of which undoubtedly did not see eye to eye with him, who were unkind to him. Yet, Paul thanked God and prayed for all!

- Do you thank God for ALL people when you remember them?
- Do you pray for ALL people when you think of them?
- Are there some people that it is more difficult to thank God for? Why?
- What is the human tendency when dealing with people who have hurt us?
- What should we do?
- Does God love tough people as much as he loves you?
- Who changes when we thank God and pray for people? You? Them? Both?
- Share of someone who hurt you, and how thanking God and praying for them helped.

### 2. Be Patient with All.

#### READ Verse 6

- <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

**NOTE:** If God is carrying out a "good work" in hearts and lives of your brothers and sisters in Christ, what do they need from us?

- Are there people that you are not so patient with?

- When you are impatient with people, how does that make them feel? (How does it make you feel when people are impatient with you?)
- Is everyone at the same spiritual level?
- Can patience keep you from getting along with others? How?
- Does God love tough people as much as he loves you?

### 3. Be Mature.

#### READ Verses 9-10

**<sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup> so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,**

NOTE: Paul's prayer is really that Christians would be mature!

- How is maturity shown in verses 9-10?
- What does it mean for love to "abound"?
- What does it mean to be pure and blameless?

- Is there a correlation between love and holiness?

**NOTE: Holiness without love is hypocrisy!**

- How do you display/show love for others?

### Application

- Think of several people that DO NOT give you warm fuzzy feelings.
  1. Now thank God for them and pray for them!
  2. Practice being patient with them.
    - God's not done with them.
    - God's been patient with you; now you be patient with them.
  3. Be mature.
    - Show love to them (even if they don't love you).
    - Respect them (even if they don't respect you).
    - Let them see holy actions come from your life.



Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day.

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