

TALK IT OVER

Gift of Christmas:

The Gift of JOY

Find your new group! vccindy.org/groups

Start Talking: Find a conversation starter for your group or use one of these.

Share a time when doing something small for someone else unexpectedly lifted your spirits.

Please read **Luke 2:5-11** aloud.

- What do you think made this joy so different from ordinary happiness? How can we experience that same kind of joy in our lives today?

Acts 20:35b NLT

"You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

- In Luke 2, the shepherds received joy, but Acts says we are blessed when we give; what does this teach us about receiving joy and something we pass on?

Romans 5:3b-4a TPT

"Even in times of trouble we have a joyful confidence, knowing that our pressures will develop in us patient endurance. And patient endurance will refine our character."

- What do you think that kind of joy looks like – joy that doesn't deny pain, but grows in the middle of it?

1 Peter 1:8-9 PEV

"You never saw Jesus, but you love Him. You can't see him now, but you trust Him. You are trusting God, and He is saving you, so you are really happy [joyful]. You are so happy you can't properly say how happy you are?"

- How can we hold onto this glorious joy even when we are still waiting for God to work things out?

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Start praying: Be bold and pray with power.

Lord Jesus, thank You for the gift of joy that You brought into the world and continues to grow in my life. As I grow closer to you, help me to look outward to focus on giving, healing and trusting. Fill my heart with a joy that cannot be shaken, a joy rooted in Your presence and Your promises. Help me to share joy generously with others, to seek healing where there is brokenness, and to trust You even when I cannot see the whole path. May I be strengthened by your joy and let that joy shine though this week.

In Your holy name I pray. Amen.

Leader: Make time to pray for and with each other. Break into groups of three, take time for healing prayer or pray with individuals requesting prayer. This is important!

Start doing:

Embrace the inexplicable Joy that Jesus offers.

If a church family truly lived out this Joy, what would you expect to see in the way they treat each other - and how would that shape the joy of the whole community?

Romans 15:13 NIV

May the God of HOPE fill you with all JOY and PEACE as you TRUST in Him, so that you may overflow with HOPE by the power of the Holy Spirit.