



Life Group Discussion Guide
“Finding Joy in a World of Struggle” – Philippians 1:1 & Acts 16

Scott Paulson – September 21, 2025

Main thought:

Joy in a world of suffering and struggle comes from knowing and living as a servant of Christ Jesus. Paul demonstrates that even when God says “no”, when opposition arises, or when suffering comes a servant’s identity in Christ allows them to find and hold on to joy.

Ice-Breaker

When was a time you had your plans changed (a “no” from God)? How did you see God’s hand in it later?

Questions

1. What stood out to you from Philippians 1:1 and Acts 16?
2. Why do you think Paul identified himself as a *servant of Christ Jesus*? How is his identity key to joy?
3. What can we learn about discerning God’s guidance from Paul’s willingness to obey God’s “no” as well as His “yes”?
4. Lydia was not the person Paul expected to meet, yet God opened her heart to believe. How does this challenge our expectations of whom God might use or save? How have you experienced this?
5. Why did Paul refuse to accept the apparent alliance from the slave girl’s demonic spirit, even though the words were true?
6. What stands out to you about the sequence of opposition, suffering, and singing of Paul & Silas in jail?
7. People were listening to Paul and Silas in jail. Who might be listening to you during your struggles? What difference does it make?
8. How can Christians model Paul’s example of putting the needs of the church above their personal rights?
9. Of the five marks of a servant (follow God’s plan, don’t be shocked by opposition, focus on pleasing God, stand even in suffering, serve over rights)—which one do you find most challenging right now?
10. How can you remind yourself this week that your primary identity is a servant of Christ Jesus?

Prayer: Take some time to pray for each other.