

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

A Weary World Rejoices - Week 4



CONNECT

Spend some time checking in. What are highs and lows since you last met? How can your group members pray for and support each other this week?

GROW

- How would you distinguish joy from happiness?
- Have you ever tried to force joy? What happened?
- Brené Brown writes, "Do we deserve our joy, given our inadequacies and imperfections? What about the starving children and the war-ravaged world? Who are we to be joyful?" Do you agree that we sometimes fear joy? Why or why not?
- Read Luke 2:1-2 and Philippians 4:4-13 (back).
- What does it mean that you are a part of God's great joy, and that it keeps you rooted in God's grace and love?

PRAY

God of grace, Sometimes life is hard and we are weary. You sent your son into this world so we can find hope, peace, love and joy. In your son's name, Amen.



BIBLE READINGS

Luke 2:1-12

1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. **2** (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) **3** And everyone went to their own town to register. **4** So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. **5** He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. **6** While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, **7** and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. **8** And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. **9** An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. **11** Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. **12** This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Philippians 4:4-13

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **8** Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. **9** Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. **10** I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. **11** I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. **12** I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. **13** I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

