

# TALKING POINTS

## JOY - HOW GOD CHANGES A LIFE

### LEARNING IN

Joy is a mystery we have to understand - it's not based on our circumstances, it's based on our relationship with God. To see beyond trying circumstances, we have to see how God produces change in us - how God changes a life.

Philippians shows us how confessing who Jesus really is builds confidence in Him when we are tested by life's trials. To confess Jesus as Lord is to put Him into a position as equal to the Father, to see Him as the object of our worship, as the One of greatest character, worth and reputation. To confess Jesus as Yahweh or Lord, is to embrace *Eternal Life*. Eternal life is not just a timeline, but rather a QUALITY of life which has two distinct parts:  
One - there's God's part of this quality of life - where God is doing His *work in us*.  
Two - there's our part of this quality of life - where we *work out* or cultivate what God has already planted in our hearts.

We are to cultivate this eternal life with an attitude of fear and trembling - not "terror", but a wholesome, serious caution. In other words - *There should be nothing more important in your life than your salvation, your eternal life, your spiritual growth - not your health, your family, your job, your income*. We often look at spiritual growth as an option - not an essential. We must prioritize our spiritual life as the most important thing. Otherwise, we drift - so we have to be intentional to return to Jesus - the anchor of our lives.

Read Philippians 2:9-12, Colossians 1:15-18

Why is rightly knowing and acknowledging (confessing) Jesus so important?

### LIVING IT OUT

There are Four Tools we can employ to work out our salvation with fear and trembling:

**The Bible** -everything we need to cope with any situation, God has given to us through the tool of the bible - a telescope for us to look at life THROUGH the truth, wisdom and comfort of what God says.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Why don't we value God's word as much as we should? What can we do to value it more?

**The Holy Spirit** - God gives each of us the tool of the Holy Spirit to provide us power and to work inside us. Over time as we yield to, surrender to and depend on the Holy Spirit, people around you see the Spirit at work inside your life.

Read Romans 8:11

How can we make it easier for the Holy Spirit to work in our lives?

**Circumstances** - God uses even difficult circumstances so He can grow us, test us and provide us all we need from Him.

Read Proverb 20:30, Hebrews 5:8

Can you share a difficult circumstance God used to grow you?

**God's Love And Acceptance** - the more you grow in God's love, the more you have the capacity to respond to God, to life and every circumstance which comes your way. The more we grow as Christians, the more we become Christ-like, the larger Christ becomes in our lives.

Read Lamentations 3:22-24

How does growing in God's love aid us in troubled times?