

# TALKING POINTS

## JOY - LOVING DIFFICULT PEOPLE

### LEARNING IN

The book of Philippians is personal and practical because it deal with a lot of problems you and I face in our lives. One of the best things about this book is it is very positive. The theme of Philippians is joy - in fact the word joy, rejoice or be glad is used 17 times in this book.

When it comes to dealing with difficult people in your life, Philippians is a great source of Godly wisdom and guidance. If you have people in your life now who you feel are robbing you of your joy, Philippians will provide you with keys to find joy - even in these difficult relationships.

Even though Paul had great difficulties when he was in Philippi (he was arrested, beaten, thrown in prison and thrown out of town), he focused on good things rather than bad in his letter to the church there. *He focused on what he could be grateful for and he let the rest go.*

Read Romans 5:3-5, 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Why is letting go of our bad experiences and being grateful for the good so hard to do?

### LIVING IT OUT

Philippians provides us with key tools for finding joy in people - even the difficult ones. Here are four practices from Philippians you can do to regain joy in problem relationships:

**Practice Gratefulness For The Good In People** - practice the discipline of finding the good in everyone. You have POWER in your words - if you want to see someone's life change, tell them about the *good* you see in them.

Read Philippians 1:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Encouragement costs nothing, yet it's rarely heard - how can we change this in our lives?

**Practice Joyful Praying** - the quickest way to change a relationship from bad to good is to start thanking God in prayer for that person.

Read Philippians 1:4, 9-11

How do you think thanking God in prayer for a difficult person will change *you*?

**Practice Patience With Other's Progress** - we don't know where people are in their journey, but we are *all* ON A JOURNEY. We must remember, whatever God has begun, He will finish - with us and *them*.

Read Philippians 1:6, Philippians 3:13-14

How can we extend more patience - more *grace* - to a difficult person at another stage of their journey?

**Practice Loving People From The Heart** - the secret to loving those difficult people in your life is to partner with Jesus to love them like He does. Depend on Him to help you love beyond your capability. When you partner with Jesus in these relationships, you have HOPE.

Read 1 John 4:7-21

Have you ever tried leaning on Jesus for the strength to love someone you're too worn out to love otherwise?