



Crazy Joy (Part 2) | Shawn Johnson | 5.10.20
Weekly Study

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

If you could choose one hobby that now seems out of your reach either financially or time-wise, what hobby would you take up and why?

SHARE

Welcome to Part Two of Crazy Joy. This week, Shawn continued a message he began last week about finding joy right in the middle of this pandemic. We've been walking through Philippians, a letter Paul wrote while under house arrest because although Paul was not able to leave his home, he had a crazy JOY!

During this season, there is so much wisdom we can gather from Paul. However, before we go any further, take some time to check in with your group by having everyone answer these questions.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you doing today? Why did you choose that number?

What's a story – from a book, a movie, an article, a conversation – that you've been gripped by recently? Why did it capture you?

What problem—either yours, or something more global —do you wish you could solve?

What's giving you hope right now?

Read Philippians 1:1-11

This is our second week in a row reading Philippians 1:1-11. What did you notice about the passage this week that you may have skipped over last week?

We could spend all year talking about the first few verses of Paul's letter to the church in Philippi because he delivers so much fantastic content right off the bat. This week, Shawn pointed out three keywords in these two verses, **holy**, **grace**, and **peace**. Let's reread it:

*"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all God's **holy** people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons: **Grace** and **peace** to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:1-2).*

The secret to crazy joy is understanding these three words. Let's break them down one by one.

1. Realize you are Holy

Holy means set apart. Whenever we see a glimpse of God in heaven, angels surround Him declaring, "Holy, holy holy is the Lord God Almighty" (Revelation 4:8). He is holy, set apart.

But Scripture also reminds us, "we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). We are set apart too. There is a purpose for you, even in the middle of a pandemic. You don't have to wait for things to go back to normal for you to move forward!

At this point, insecurities may be building in your mind. You may be thinking about all the mistakes you've made in the past that disqualify you from God using you. The same was probably true for everyone in Philippi hearing Paul's words, which is why Paul wisely moves straight from calling us holy (set apart) to reminding us of God's grace.

2. Accept His Grace

Grace is God's undeserved favor. In his second letter to the church in Corinth, Paul wrote, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). God's calling on your life is not based on anything you did; it is based on what He did for you on the cross.

The invitation is to simply receive this undeserved favor through faith!

3. Experience His Peace

Biblical peace is not just the absence of conflict, it's also the restoration of things that are broken. Isaiah called Jesus the "Prince of Peace" because He entered into a broken world and began putting it back together. Jesus didn't come to earth to avoid conflict. He came to rebuild and establish peace through his life, death, and resurrection.

As followers of Jesus, that same peace is available for us to walk in every day. Today, we have the opportunity to both experience God's peace, and offer that same peace to the world!

Holy, Grace, and Peace are all essential to walking with Jesus. The good news is once we understand these words, we don't have to try very hard to experience joy. Joy is the natural fruit that comes from meditating on God's holiness, grace, and peace. We'll talk more about it in the next section.

Which of those three words (holiness, grace, peace) comes most naturally to you?

Which of those three words (holiness, grace, peace) is the most difficult for you to understand or accept?

M O V E

Read Philippians 4:4-9

When is it easy for you to have joy? Describe the situation. What time is it? What are you doing? Who are you with?

When is it the most challenging for you to remain joyful? Describe the situation. What time is it? What are you doing? Who are you with?

The world could use some joy right now, and we can be the ones to bring it to them. In this passage, Paul tells us, “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” (Philippians 4:8).

As followers of Jesus, we must constantly remind each other of this verse. Especially during these times. Right now, it is so easy to let our minds get swept away by all the bad news, pessimism, and fear. But according to Paul, our obligation is to bring joy to the world. To do so, we must train ourselves to fix our minds on whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy!

Let’s practice doing that together with this week’s take-home assignment.

What is one lovely or excellent thing you’ve experienced this week? Share it with the Group.

Take-Home Assignment: LAUGH

Laughter is one practical way we can bring joy to this world. The Bible reminds us, “A cheerful heart is good medicine” (Proverbs 17:22).

This week you have one of the most entertaining take-home assignments of the year! Set apart 20 minutes every day to do something that makes you laugh. Here are some examples:

- Watch a funny TV show
- Call someone who makes you laugh
- Listen to a comedy podcast
- Read a funny book/article
- Play a fun game over ZOOM with friends

P R A Y

We need prayer now more than ever. Spend some time sharing prayer requests. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking off into two separate calls to share more freely.

T O G O

I can do all this through him who gives me strength. - Philippians 4:13