



## Community Group Study: Jesus Is Joy

### Getting Started

A basketball coach may stop working on plays and have the players work on basics, like dribbling, passing, and free throws, so the foundation of their play is solid. Tell about a time you realized you were making something more complicated than it needed to be and readjusted your focus to the basics.

Read Nehemiah 8:1-12.

### Discussion

Why had God's people been in exile? See Judges 2:11-13 and Nehemiah 1:8.

What had God promised? Read Leviticus 26:40-45 and Nehemiah 1:9.

In Nehemiah 8:1-4, what facilities did they have for their worship and study gathering that day?

Check all that apply:

- Beautiful building    Choir    Podium/platform    Tasteful décor    Lights  
 Coffee/snacks    Classrooms    Screens    Town square    Comfortable seats

Read Matthew 5:3-4, Jesus' first words in the Sermon on the Mount as He's beginning His public ministry. Why do you think Jesus says those who are poor in spirit and who mourn are blessed, but the people in Nehemiah 8:9-12 are told not to cry or grieve?

The people grieved over their sin but could rejoice because God had delivered them home. How do the following verses describe the joy of coming home to God's kingdom?

- Isaiah 35:10
- Hebrews 12:22-24
- Revelation 21:1-4

Read 1 Timothy 2:4 and 2 Peter 3:9. What is God's desire?

The Israelites experienced much hardship, even exile, and bondage in a strange land. What counsel do the following verses give us for dealing with any hardship we experience?

- Habakuk 3:17-19
- Romans 5:3-5
- 1 Peter 1:6
- 1 Peter 4:13

What do the following verses say about the source of our joy?

- Luke 2:10-11
- Romans 5:1-2
- Romans 5:8
- Ephesians 1:7
- 1 Peter 1:8-9

### **Application**

Grieve over your sin. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn" (Matthew 5:4). Why are they blessed? Because they'll be comforted. 1 John 1:9 says if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us and to cleanse us.

What sin are you holding on to?

What keeps you from fully knowing the joy of salvation through Jesus Christ?

Find your joy in Jesus! Let Him, and Him alone, be your source of confidence and joy. Paul knew that when he was at his weakest, then Jesus' strength showed all the more (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). In Jesus, we have sure hope and absolute confidence in God (Hebrews 4:15-16). If you doubt, if you struggle with putting your hope completely in Him, ask God to help you, and ask for prayer from other believers.

Return to the basics. Right now, much of life as we're used to it is shut down. Eating in restaurants, attending concerts, sporting events, and school activities – they aren't happening. It's a great time to readjust our focus on what really matters. Consider how you can spend more time in God's word and in prayer. What will you do, starting this week, to refocus on God and your relationship with Him?