

Applying It In My LifeGroup time - 20 minutes

1. Reconciliation is not always easy but we are all called to be ministers of reconciliation. When have you felt God encouraging you to let go of a dispute? When have you seen God prompting you to reconcile a broken relationship? What are some of the key steps in the process of reconciliation?
2. Is rejoicing in the Lord a feeling or an action? How should you seek to fulfill this command if you don't feel like it? How does Paul's prescription for anxiety and stress differ materially from a secular "positive mental attitude"?
3. What can each of us do to guard our thought life? Why is guarding our thought life so important to a healthy Christian walk? In what ways do we allow Satan to infiltrate and infect our thought life? How can we support each other in our pursuit to enjoy a pure thought life?

Prayer TimeGroup time - 15 minutes

Thank God for the peace that comes when we trust Him with our anxieties and worries. Ask God to help you resolve any conflicts you might have with others in a spirit of reconciliation. Ask God to give you self-control in your thought life so that you can enjoy the peace of God in your life.

Finish your prayer time by praying for the needs of those in your *Growth Group*. Take a few minutes to share prayer requests. Ask someone in the group to record your prayers so you can see in future weeks where God is answering your prayers.

THE CENTER OF EVERYTHING *A Guide To Joyful Living*

A Guide To Joyful Living

- Stand FIRM in the Lord. Philippians 4:1

 - Work on earth, live for HEAVEN. 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

 - Get along TOGETHER. Philippians 4:2-3

 - Rejoice ALWAYS. Philippians 4:4

 - Be GENTLE. Philippians 4:5

 - Be prayerful; be PEACEFUL. Philippians 4:6-7
- Prayer:*
- SUPPLICATION/REQUESTS
 - THANKSGIVING
-
- Focus your thoughts on the PURE. Philippians 4:8-9

GROWTH GROUP HOMEWORK

Week of November 10-15, 2014

Getting Started.....Group time - 15 minutes

1. Is it possible to live totally free of anxiety? Why or why not? What are some of the primary causes of worry and anxiety in our lives? When have you experienced anxiety producing a good result for you? When have you experienced God's peace in the midst of anxiety and worry?

FOR GROWTH GROUP TIME

Getting Into God's Word.....Group time - 40 minutes

Read **Philippians 4:2-9** (In preparation to answer questions)

1. Paul's letter to the Philippians was to be read to the whole congregation. Why does Paul make this strife between Euodia and Syntyche so public? How does such a public personal struggle affect a community of believers? What does Paul communicate about the Biblical teaching on interpersonal conflict here?

2. Paul has already recommended rejoicing in the Lord in chapter 3, yet he comes back to it in this section. Why does he come back to the topic here? What result does Paul promise when believers pray instead of worrying? Is Paul in any way asking stressed-out people to fake gladness? Why or why not?

3. Why did Paul mention "gentleness/reasonableness" in the context of stress? What temptations do stressed out people sometimes succumb to? How does the nearness of the Lord's coming translate into a willingness to give up one's personal rights and show consideration for others?

4. What elements Paul would have believers substitute for anxiety in their lives? How would you distinguish between prayer and petition? Why does anxiety tend to breed prayer paralysis? What are the things that prevent us from regularly presenting our requests to God?

5. Look over the list of things Paul instructs the believer to focus their thought life on. How does focusing our minds on these things transform our thinking and behavior? Which of these ideals is most challenging for you to live out in your daily life? What is one thing you could do this week to live out these values?