

WITNESS – Reaching out to others
(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)

Giving Thanks to God

What gives you joy? Thank God for the joy which you experience.

Praying for one another

God wants you to experience joy. What keeps you from experiencing the joy God wants you to know? Pray for each other.

Praying for our community

Pray that our community will know that God is a God of joy. Pray that we as a church exhibit this joy.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

2

Luke 24:33–53

2 Joy

Purpose: To understand why the early disciples were so joyful and how we can recapture that joy today.

Joy in the New Testament has its source in the Lord rather than in mere physical comfort and well-being. Joy is also grounded in the hope of Christ's return. That is why Paul could rejoice even in prison.

WELCOME – Breaking the ice

(Aim for 10 minutes)

Think of your wildest dream, the one thing in life you would rather see happen than anything else. Describe how you would feel if your dream were to come true.

WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord

(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)

Pause:-

- * Make yourself comfortable,
- * seek to relax any parts of your body that are carrying stress,
- * breathe in and out slowly, breathing in God's love and breathing out anything that is not of God,
- * repeat a prayer phrase like, "Thank you, Jesus" or "My God, my all" or "Jesus, Son of God have mercy on me a sinner".

Rejoice:- Listen to a song or read a psalm

Ask:- Ask God to speak to you as you study his word

Yield:- Surrender to God acknowledging that He is God and you are not and pray that you will put into practice what you believe He is saying to you as you study His word.

WORD – Applying the truth

(Aim for 40 – 45 minutes)

The Holy Spirit brings joy to every Christian. He fills our hearts with praise and thankfulness to God. Yet as you look back over the past few weeks, how joyful have you been? How can you experience this refreshing fruit of the Spirit more fully?

After Jesus' crucifixion, two of his disciples were walking to Emmaus. Suddenly a stranger joined them and began explaining the Scriptures about the Messiah. They did not recognize the stranger until they began to eat with him. Then their eyes were opened, they realized it was Jesus, and he vanished from their sight! They were so excited that they rushed back to Jerusalem to tell the others. This passage helps us recapture the joy of the early disciples.

1. Read Luke 24:33–53. Try to picture those first few moments when the two find the eleven and the others (vv. 33–35). Now describe what you see!

2. Suddenly, something happens to interrupt the story (vv. 36–39). How does the climate in the room change?

What does this reveal about the disciples' true state of belief regarding Jesus' resurrection?

3. Why did Jesus show them his hands and feet, and ask them to touch him (vv. 39–40)?

4. Remember the "Welcome - breaking the ice" question. How does this help you understand what it meant for the disciples to be too joyful and amazed to believe (v. 41)?

5. In what ways would their faith in him have been increased by seeing Jesus eat (vv. 41–43)?

6. Why were these activities—showing them his hands and feet and eating before them—necessary before he could open their minds to understand the Scriptures (v. 45)?

7. The disciples, along with almost all other Jews, expected that the Messiah would be a political conqueror who would stamp out Rome's rule and restore Israel to her former glory. How does Jesus change their vision and understanding at this point in the narrative (vv. 46–47)?

8. What the Father has promised (v. 49) is the Holy Spirit who would be sent to the disciples in the near future. In light of what Jesus has just been saying (vv. 46–48), why is the Spirit's presence so important?

9. In verses 52–53 the disciples have changed from wondering and disbelieving for joy to having “great joy.” How does Jesus' resurrection and the promise of the Holy Spirit help you to define *joy*?

10. How can telling others about Jesus (v. 48) help us to experience this joy as fully as possible?

From Fruit of the Spirit by Hazel Offner. Copyright 1987 by Hazel Offner. Published by InterVarsity Press.