

## INTRO

- Name one person you know who exemplifies a joy-filled life.

## LET'S TALK: MENTAL HEALTH

One of the biggest hurdles for anyone struggling with any degree of mental illness is overcoming the stigma attached to it. Together, let's work to make the church a safe place for each of us to come as we are, bringing our pain and our brokenness, to a place of grace, acceptance and hope.

## READ

Philippians 4:4-8

## REFLECT &amp; RESPOND

**1. Rejoice and be glad**

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118:24)

David made this declaration after recounting his distress, the threat against his safety, surrounded by those who hated him, fear for his very life, even the discipline of the Lord. Yet, in the midst, he saw the steadfast love of the Lord, and called for rejoicing.

Christians rejoice, not because life is free from pain and suffering, but because we see the God who loves us, suffered for us, and gives us ultimate hope.

## Rejoice

- to be glad; take delight

## Glad

- feeling joy or pleasure; delighted; pleased
- characterized by or showing cheerfulness, joy, or pleasure

*Qu: On a scale of 1-10, **generally**, how much does joy and gladness characterize your life?*

*Qu: On a scale of 1-10, **today**, how much did joy and gladness characterize your life?*

*Qu: Name, with one word, one thing that hinders or steals your joy or gladness.*

**2. Today**

Jesus told us to focus on "today"; that each day has its own challenges:

"Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matthew 6:34 ESV)

(Each day has enough trouble of its own. NASB)

The prayer of Moses recorded in Psalm 90 asks this of the Lord:

"Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." (Psalm 90:14)

*Qu: How can something from your past or thoughts of the future rob you of a life characterized by rejoicing?*

Paul exhorted us in Philippians 4 to rejoice in the Lord always. He reminded us to pray, to be thankful, and to take care what you think of about.

*Qu: Of these 3 practices, prayer, thanksgiving, or guarding your thoughts, how could you benefit from focusing on one of these today?*

## PRAY

From Hebrews 12:

"...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross..."

Pray for one another:

- a. to remember that it is Jesus who is the "perfecter" of our faith: the one who brings our faith to maturity
- b. for any specific needs related to today's discussion