



## **A Groovy Series on Joy - Part 5 Sermon Discussion Notes**

### **Opening Thought**

Joy in life is found not in the absence of struggles but in spite of them. In every situation there are several things to focus on. Our eyes are usually drawn to the pain in most situations instead of the potential of that situation to bring glory to God. Our joy is always connected with discovering the hidden plan of God in our pain. The Old Testament figure of Joseph illustrates this truth marvelously. When he went through rejection by his jealous brothers and ultimately ended up in an Egyptian prison for 13 years because of being falsely accused he remained steadfast because he saw the plan and purpose of God. Notice his words to his brothers after he became second in command of all of Egypt.

*“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good  
to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”  
Genesis 50:20 NIV*

### **Key Scriptures**

#### ***Philippians 1:12-18***

*12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly. 15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. NIV*

#### ***2 Corinthians 4:16-18***

*16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an*

*eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. NIV*

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Discuss this quote by Epictetus the ancient stoic philosopher who lived AD 55 to AD 135.

***“Men are disturbed not by things, but by the view which they take of them.”  
Epictetus***

2. Where was Paul when he wrote the book of Philippians?
3. What was Paul’s focus while he was in this predicament?
4. List the advantages that Paul saw in this situation when he wrote the book of Philippians. How many can you list from the passage in Philippians 1:12-18?
5. Two things can be looked at in a trial - the pain or the purpose of God in the situation. Why is it easier to look at the pain than the plan of God?
6. What personal stories do you have where a challenging situation ultimately had God’s fingerprints all over it because he was up to something in what looked like a negative situation?
7. Discuss the aspects below found in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. (See also 2 Corinthians 11:23-30)
  - Light trials
  - Momentary trials (little while)
  - Eternal weight of glory

### **Closing Thought**

When our small plans seem to be ruined by a negative circumstance they may be interrupted by a bigger and more significant plan designed by God himself.