

- The Glass –

Ice-Breaker:

- By nature and personality, are you more of a 'glass is half-full' or 'glass is half-empty' person?

Happy: "Fortunate, lucky, cheerful, characterized by or indicative of pleasure..." (Random House College Dictionary). Defined this way, happiness is dependent on our circumstances.

Joy: Biblical joy is true contentment and serenity that comes from internal factors such as our faith in the Lord. Therefore, joy is not dependent on our circumstances.

Note: People sometimes speak of 'happiness' or 'inner-happiness' and define it as we define joy.

Discussion:

1. **Read Philippians 4:4-9.** How does this passage support a glass is half-full approach to life?
2. **Read James 1:2-4; Acts 5:40-41; Romans 8:28.** Notice that in Romans 8:28, Paul doesn't say all things *are good*, he says that God works all things together *for good*. How do these passages support the notion that even in tough times we can maintain a positive attitude?
3. **Read Philippians 4:4.**
    - What does it mean to rejoice "in the Lord" always?
    - Joy is a command, therefore joy is a choice. How can we choose to be joyful?
4. **Read Philippians 4:12.** What do you consider to be "the secret of being content?"
5. **Discuss the following statement, sometimes called: 'The Happiness [Joy] Paradox':** *I will never be happy if the ultimate goal of my life is for me to be happy. Happy is one of those things that comes only as a byproduct when we're pursuing something bigger and better – a meaningful life.*

Application:

- Make a list of things you think would constitute a meaningful life.