

Series: Practice Makes Perfect

Week #3

Message: Practice for Joy

Date: June 19/20

Passage: John 15:1-17

This week we celebrated Father's Day, honored the men at SCG and talked about joy. Much of what Doyle shared was how obedience leads to joy! This week in your small group you will get to explore the **kind of relationship with Jesus and other believers** that we can have...**all because of Jesus' death for us**. Through his death, Jesus did for us what we could never have done for ourselves by making it possible for not only our sins to be forgiven but for us to reconnect with him in a joyful and new way. And that's the focus of **John 15:1-17** where Jesus teaches his disciples about the **relationship that he longs to have with his followers**. And then he goes on to paint a compelling portrait of the kind of **relationship that we can have with other believers**.

1. Introduction: What is something that always brings you a sense of joy?

Leaders Tip: Allow 8-10 minutes for people to respond. Typically the simple things in life bring us joy. Relationships, a job well done, victory and even doing what is right seem to be the biggest joy givers. This question will remind people that being connected to good things and good people bring us the greatest joy.

2. Observation: Read John 15:1-17. How does Jesus describe our new relationship with Him, His Father and other believers?

Leaders Tip: Allow at least 12 minutes for your group to respond. **Our relationship with Jesus:** He is our "true vine" (1); his message prunes us (3); we ("branches") need to stay connected ("remain") to him in order to be "fruitful" (4-5); apart from him we can't do anything (5); he will grant our requests if we stay connected to him and his words "remain" in us (7); he loves us like his Father loves him (9); we "remain" in his love when we obey him (10); he fills us with his joy (11); we are his friends when we obey him (14); he has told us what the Father has told him (15); he chose us to bear "fruit" (16).

Our relationship with the Father: he is the gardener who cuts off branches that don't produce fruit and prunes us to produce more fruit (1-2); he gives us what we ask for when we are connected to Jesus and bearing fruit (16). **Our relationship with believers:** we are to love each other the way Jesus loves us (12, 17); we can measure our love for others by our willingness to lay down our lives (13).

3. Understanding: Describe someone you know who has that kind of relationship with Jesus or with other believers.

Leaders Tip: Allow your group 10 minutes to respond. Living models of these relationships are always helpful...especially when we are trying to determine what they would look like in 21st Century Orange County life. None of us are able to live out these relationships perfectly, but members of your group might be able to talk about significant people in their lives who have modeled them in some kinds of tangible ways. Perhaps this is an opportunity for various group members to be affirmed by others who have seen these relational qualities in them.

4. Application: What is one step you could take to cultivate that kind of relationship with Jesus or with other believers?

Leaders Tip: Allow your group 10-12 minutes to respond. After describing what these relationships might look like in question #3, invite group members to identify at least one step they could take to move towards those kinds of relationships in some kind of tangible ways. Feel free to **pray for one another either in pairs or as a large group in response to what group members share.**

Pray: Close in prayer.

***Greater Impact* Question of the week – How can you personally engage with Greater Impact the next couple weeks?**

Leaders Tip: Soon we will be in a new Worship Center and enjoying a much improved campus. We don't want to forget why SCG is moving forward as a church and creating a place for more people to know and worship Christ. For the next several weeks we want the participants in your small group to talk about how they can make a greater impact. Spend a few minutes asking your group the question above. It's important that as a church we don't lose sight of where and why we are going there.

Attention All Leaders

You're invited to our next training! Also please invite any emerging or potential leaders in your group or that you may know. If every group at SCG launched a new leader this year then we would double the number of people able to participate in a small group. We will have fun as we learn together.

The Art of Asking a Great Question – Essential Training for Small Groups Leaders

Wednesday, July 14th – 7:00-8:30pm – The Ranch House Room #103 Nothing generates a great discussion like a fantastic question. As a leader, great questions tee you up for success. In this conversation, we will show you how to ask great questions, questions that deepen relationships and result in life change. Join us as we learn the secrets to using great questions, how to ask a question beyond the question, how to write your own great questions and much more. Light snacks and drinks will be provided. RSVP to Sally at sally@seacoastgrace.org
