



Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8-9 (NIV)

If we want God's joy:

- Our reason for living has to be greater and stronger than what we face in this world.

21 For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. Philippians 1:21 (NLT)

- We tap into God's joy when our life is about God's purpose.

As long as I'm alive in this body, there is good work for me to do. If I had to choose right now, I hardly know which I'd choose. Hard choice! The desire to break camp here and be with Christ is powerful. Some days I can think of nothing better. But most days, because of what you are going through, I am sure that it's better for me to stick it out here. So I plan to be around awhile, companion to you as your growth and joy in this life of trusting God continues. You can start looking forward to a great reunion when I come visit you again. We'll be praising Christ, enjoying each other. Philippians 1:25-26 (MSG)

27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ... Philippians 1:27 (NIV)

- Whatever life throws at you, your behavior matters.

Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Philippians 1:27(NLT)

Living as citizens of heaven:

- There is no place in the life of a believer for racism.

9 But if you favor some people over others, you are committing a sin. You are guilty of breaking the law. James 2:9 (NLT)
 9 After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." Revelation 7:9-10 (NIV)

- Heaven is a place of diversity and unity.

- Loving God must be expressed in loving all people.

If anyone boasts, "I love God," and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won't love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can't see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both. 1 John 4:20-21 (MSG)

- Racism or rioting are a result of pride.

...you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Philippians 1:27(NLT)

Living as a citizen of heaven means:

- I live with the concerns of a citizen of heaven.

"With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Micah 6:6-7 (NIV)

- I live with the conduct of a citizen of heaven.

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8 (NIV)

8 Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Proverbs 31:8(NLT)

...if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves. 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. 5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus... who became a servant. Philippians 2: 1-5 (NIV)

As a citizen of heaven:

- Don't let pride be your guide.

When you do things, do not let selfishness or pride be your guide... Philippians 2:3a (NCV)

- Be humble or you'll stumble.

... Instead, be humble and give more honor to others than to yourselves. Philippians 2:3b (NCV)

Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Philippians 2:3 (MSG)

Pride leads to destruction, and arrogance to downfall. Proverbs 16:18 (GWT)

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. James 4:6 (NLT)

- Learn the lost art of attentiveness.

Do not be interested only in your own life, but be interested in the lives of others. Philippians 2:4 (NCV)

- Live like Jesus did.

In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:5 (NCV)

Living without pride like Jesus means:

- Don't demand what we think we deserve.

Though he was in the form of God, he did not consider being equal with God something to exploit. But he emptied himself... Philippians 2:6-7 (CEB)

- We look for ways to serve others.

...of his own free will he gave up all he had, and took the nature of a servant. He became like a human being and appeared in human likeness. Philippians 2:7 (GNT)

- We do what's right even when it hurts.

He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death - his death on the cross. Philippians 2:8 (GNT)



**TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE
IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.**

Questions for Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- What does it mean for us to live our lives worthy of the gospel of Christ? Do you believe your behavior matters? Why?
- How bad do you believe racism is among believers? Why is it still a problem? What can we do to correct this problem?
- Do you believe that racism & rioting are a result of pride? Why?
- How do we prevent pride from being our guide?
- Why is attentiveness important and how do we live attentive to the needs of others?
- Do you think that we tend to make following Jesus about how it benefits us rather than how we love others?
- Read Philippians 2:7, did Jesus seek out equality when he became like his creation? What does that mean for how we live in a diverse world?
- How does sacrificing for others deal with our pride? How are you sacrificing for those that are oppressed?

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