

# LHCF Sermon Discussion Guide

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## Characteristics of a Prevailing Church John 17:13-26

Joy is the 1<sup>st</sup> characteristic of a prevailing church – *"Now I am coming to you. I told them many things while I was with them in this world so they would be filled with my joy."* John 17:13 (NLT)

### 1. Why joy is so important

- Joy is therapeutic and healing  
*"Being cheerful keeps you healthy. It is slow death to be gloomy all the time."* Prov. 17:22 (TEV)
- Joy gives strength and power  
*"...Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."* Nehemiah 8:10 (NIV)
- Joy reduces the tension and frictions of life  
*"He has sent me to comfort all those who are sad and to help the sorrowing people of Jerusalem. I will give them a crown to replace their ashes, and the oil of gladness to replace their sorrow, and clothes of praise to replace their spirit of sadness."* Isa. 61:2-3(NCV)
- Joy indicates that God is active in our life  
*"In the kingdom of God, eating and drinking are not important. The important things are living right with God, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit."* Rom. 14:17(NCV)
- Joy is the hallmark of the Christian church  
*"Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, revel in him!"* Phil. 4:4 (MSG)

## 2. What to do when you've lost your joy

- Read and study God's Word

*"Your words are what sustain me; they are food to my hungry soul. They bring joy to my sorrowing heart and delight me." Jere. 15:16 (TLB)*

- Spend time with other Christians

*"We saw it, we heard it, and now we're telling you so you can experience it along with us, this experience of communion with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. Our motive for writing is simply this: We want you to enjoy this, too. Your joy will double our joy!" 1 John 1:3 (MSG)*

- Fill up with the Holy Spirit

*"Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts." Eph. 5:18-19 (NLT)*

- Develop a meaningful and consistent prayer life

*"I will bring these people to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Isa. 56:7 (NCV)*

**Mission or Ministry as appropriate** – Who can you invite to your group or minister to that are having trouble trusting God...don't let them battle that alone, help them get in a small group and open up!

**Discipleship** – Remember God gives us free will but also invites us to seek Him with all our heart to please Him, to enjoy His plan for our lives, and to fulfill His purposes. If we are to mature to be more Christ-like and find significance and meaning in our lives, we should follow His example. What actions can you begin to take this week to help reveal God's plan for your life?