

growing further

Why Christians Should Have the Most Fun

"YOLO JOY" Week 2

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There is nothing more fun than being a Christian and following the will of God. Christians should have more fun than anyone else because we do not have to suffer bad consequences for the fun we have. Of course there are parameters to our fun- not everything that people consider to be fun is appropriate behavior for believers. But then there are parameters even for people who are not Christians. Even our worldly society would condemn some things that people would do in "fun." No one believes it is good when an adult lives his life as if he were a twelve year-old. But it is clear from the Bible that God has a sense of humor- just look at some of the animals he created! Many people believe that Christians are against having fun, that the normal Christian walks around looking like he was baptized in lemon juice! Nothing could be further from the truth: God created everything for us to enjoy, and a large part of that enjoyment is to have fun in life. In the Old Testament God gave Israel seven feast days and one fast day during their year. According to that ratio, we should have fun seven times more than we are serious! It is important to learn God's parameters for the fun we should have, but other than those, God intends life to be enjoyed.

OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER.

THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

Romans 6:12-13 (NIV)

A fool finds pleasure in evil conduct, but a man of understanding delights in wisdom.

Proverbs 10:23 (NIV)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Colossians 3:5 (NIV)

1. Using the verses above, come up with a concise statement that you could use to help you determine what kinds of fun and pleasure would not be appropriate for a believer.
2. Read Romans chapter fourteen as a group. This passage deals with eating meat that had been sacrificed to an idol in a pagan temple, which was a common practice in the first century. This meat would then be sold in the market and often was the best cut of meat. Christians had begun to buy and eat this meat. There were other Christians who thought this was wrong to do because it had been offered to an idol. Scripture says nothing about any particular food being good or evil. Using this passage, come up with some guidelines as a group that would help you determine if God would want you to do something that is not expressly forbidden in scripture.

“Everything is permissible”--but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible”--but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others. Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, for, “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.” If some unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience.

1 Corinthians 10:23-27 (NIV)

3. Talk about how this passage of scripture fits in with the passage in Romans fourteen. Is this a contradiction? Do you think that in some cases it is okay to do certain things when you are with one group of people and yet be wrong to do with another group? How could you tell?

Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him--for this is his lot. Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work--this is a gift of God. He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart.

Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 (NIV)

4. What would you say the above passage tells us about having fun and enjoying life? Since this is a gift from God, do you think that having fun is an act of worship? Why or why not?

MAKING IT PRACTICAL (OPTIONAL)

Below are some practical exercises that your group can do to learn how to be joyful.

Level 1 Challenge: Examine the things you do for fun and then apply what you learned in this study to those things. If you determine that some of the things you do are not glorifying to God, stop doing them.

Level 2 Challenge: The next time that you are having fun, enjoying something you are doing, thank God for it and consider it as part of your worship and service to God.

Level 3 Challenge: As a group plan an event where you just go out and do something fun together. Have a party, go bowling, etc.

Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

Suggestions for This Week’s Study

• Here are the principles from Romans chapter 14 that can help us decide if we should do something that the Bible does not expressly forbid.

- Do not judge other believers for thinking that something is wrong when you know it is not forbidden. Verses 1-4
- You should never do anything that you are not 100% sure it would be okay with God. Verses 5,6,22,23
- Realize that whatever you do has an impact on everyone around you. Verse 7
- Realize we are all going to give an account to God for everything we do. Verses 10-12
- Never do anything that would cause another person to stumble in their relationship with Christ. Verses 13,15,21
- Never do anything that would tear down the work of God in someone’s life. Verses 16-18,20
- Only do things that will build people up, not tear them down. Verse 19

Preparing to Lead Your Group

1. PRAY for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God’s wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher, and that you will be God’s instrument to lead the group to greater understanding

and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.

2. PLAN where you want to take your group in the next 60-90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Consider God's five purposes for the church: Glorify God, Relate to Everyone, Act Like Jesus, Care for Everyone, Express God's Love and make a plan to encourage your members to growth and commitment in their weak areas.

3. PONDER YOUR PROGRESS after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment.

Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

1. Going Further is a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. We've designed it so it can be completed easily within 30-45 minutes. As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group. Decide in advance what is more important to focus on, should time not allow for the entire lesson.

2. Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group.

3. Personal applications are essential for growth and should be included in every discussion. When discussing how they will apply principles, group members may state very general goals, such as, "I need to spend more time in prayer." It is important for you to help people make goals that are very specific and commit to specific plans of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 25 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.

4. Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.

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