

# growing further

## Give Your Joy Away

"YOLO JOY" Week 3

Rick Long

March 24-25, 2018

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Romans 1:16 (NIV)

The ultimate joy that we have as Christians is the hope of living with God forever in heaven. Anything beyond that is icing on the cake. Knowing that this life is not all there is, that it is temporary, allows us as Christians to endure anything that life throws at us. It is the ultimate "light at the end of the tunnel." It is the reason that Christ came to earth, to rescue us from an eternity separated from God. Because all of this is true, then the greatest way that we can serve other people is to share the message of the gospel with them. It is imperative that we learn how to share this message, this hope that we have. When Jesus called the apostles to follow him, he said that he would make them into fishers of men. If I am following Jesus, then I must learn how to fish! The GOSPEL method of sharing this message is a way to clearly and concisely communicate the way of salvation to others. It is not the only method out there, but it has proven over time to be an extremely effective method. So, get out your rods and reels and let's learn how to fish!

### **OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER.**

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

1. What are the six ideas to share with someone that are represented by the acrostic G.O.S.P.E.L.? (They are listed in the sermon notes). What is a verse from the Bible that states each point?
2. The GOS part of the GOSPEL method is called "the bad news." Why do you think it would be important to communicate these ideas to a person who does not know Christ as savior?

If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about--but not before God.

What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Romans 4:2-5 (NIV)

3. The word "justified" is a legal term which means to "declare innocent, to declare as righteous." What do you think it means to be justified before God? In this passage, it says that Abraham was not justified by his works. What do you think that means? What was credited to Abraham when Abraham believed God? What do you think it means when it says "However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness"?

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16 (NIV)

4. The word “believe” is the Greek word *pisteuo* which means to trust in, to rely on, to have faith in. So when we tell a person that all they have to do is believe in Jesus to have eternal life, what are we telling them to do? Is this different from simply acknowledging the facts of who Jesus was and that he died on the cross for our sins? How so? What do you think this verse means when it says that a person who believes shall not perish?

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.

John 10:27-30 (NIV)

5. In this passage Jesus speaks about his sheep and that he gives them eternal life. Who do you think the sheep are? According to Jesus, what will never happen to anyone that he has given eternal life to? What do you think this means for us? Jesus said that no one can snatch, or remove, a person from his hand if they have been given eternal life. What do you think this means? Jesus then goes on and gives the reason why this would be impossible-what is that reason? What would you have to be in order to snatch yourself out of God’s hand? Is that even possible? Do you think a believer can lose their salvation by something they do? If they could, then what are they trusting in to begin with to get them to heaven?

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Matthew 9:35-38 (NIV)

6. In the above passage, Jesus said that the harvest was plentiful. What do you think he was talking about? What do you think it would mean for you to be a worker in this harvest? Do you think that being a “harvester” is optional for a Christian?

### **MAKING IT PRACTICAL (OPTIONAL)**

Below are some practical exercises that your group can do to learn how to share their faith with unbelievers.

**Level 1 Challenge:** Memorize the six points of the GOSPEL as an outline to follow when sharing the gospel message with unbelievers. Then memorize the verses that go with each point.

**Level 2 Challenge:** Begin praying for someone that you know does not know Christ as savior, pray for their salvation. Then pray that God will give you the opportunity to share the gospel with them and when God answers that prayer (he will, you are praying for yourself to be a worker in the harvest) share the gospel with them.

**Level 3 Challenge:** As a group sign up for the “Life in 6 Words” class the next time it is offered to learn more extensively how to become a fisher of men.

### **Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes**

#### **Suggestions for This Week’s Study**

- Help your members understand that sharing the gospel with others is the mission for which God leaves us on earth and why he does not immediately take us to heaven when we trust Christ.
- Help your members understand that salvation is a free gift that is not earned nor kept by any good thing

that we do.

- Make sure that each and every member of your group has the assurance of their salvation, that there is nothing they could do to lose their salvation once they have trusted Christ as savior.
- As a group participate in an activity where the purpose is to reach unsaved people with the gospel.

### **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.

