



These Digging Deeper questions can be used the week following the Sunday message. You can use these questions for personal growth and development, or as a guide for your family or Connect Group discussions.

Message Recap:

Read Luke 2:15-17

Living in the presence of God, through the person of Jesus Christ, and following the path of Jesus leads to a life of joy despite the brokenness of the world in which we live. We are offered an invitation to this life, the work is all done, we simply have to say “yes”. God desires us to be in his presence and we know this by examining the Bible. From the first book of Genesis, through the life of Jesus as seen in the New Testament to the final book of Revelation there is a common theme. God speaks of being **with** us. He doesn’t talk about controlling us or pushing us or observing us. He wants to be *with* us. He wants us to be in his presence and follow Christ’s path. Accept the invitation of Jesus to live joy by knowing and following him.

Pray

Dear Jesus, lead us into your presence, guiding us to follow your path, and bringing your joy into our lives. We say “yes” to your invitation being grateful for the work Christ Jesus did for us on the cross and thankful for your desire to be with us. Amen

Getting Started

- “Joy to the World” is a long-time favorite Christmas carol. Share with the group a time you experience Christmas joy as a child.
- We all see the brokenness of this world. Tell about a time you found joy through Christ despite being in the midst of a broken situation.

Digging Deeper

1. Consider this statement: “Living joy in a broken world is an incredibly real possibility.” Agree or disagree? Why or why not?
2. What are or have been the obstacles that prevent or have prevented you from saying “yes” to God’s invitation?
3. What does living *with* God, in his presence, mean to you and how is this specifically reflected in you life?
4. In what ways have you overcome the darkness and cold of being distant from God and instead chosen to continually follow the path of joy through Jesus Christ?
5. Why do you think God wants to be *with you*? Do you struggle with that? Explain your answer.
6. Read Matthew 9:9-13. Matthew was able and willing to intentionally follow Jesus. What are the challenges you face that keeps you from doing the same?
7. What step can you take today to lead you to (or closer to) a life *with* God, following the path of Jesus Christ leading to joy?

Living Jesus

In our broken world, joy seems to be fleeting and illusive. This is what Satan wants us to believe. The Bible has a message that tells us a different story. Throughout the Bible we see God desires to be with us. We find that joy is real and available. God’s message is that living joy is a person and a path. None of us are qualified to be in God’s presence. None of us deserve the sacrifice Christ made for us. Yet we are invited—every day. We just need to say “yes” and follow. Choose to accept the simple invitation from Jesus of “Come be with me!” and learn how to live in joy.

Your Story

Are you hesitating to say “yes”? Have you said “yes” but still find God is distant? Maybe you have been living close to God and feeling his joy in this broken world. Consider your story and share how you can move forward to finding or keeping the joy of Christ. **Share your personal story with us [here](#) or choose Share Your Story under Forms at [MySevernRun.com](#).**