



Week 3: A Focused Mind

FACILITATOR'S NOTE:

- ✓ Start your group discussion with the "Check-in" question to help your members reflect back on their week and follow up on last week's application challenge.
- ✓ Review the "Big Idea" to help you gain clarity around the heart of this week's message and focus your group's discussion towards a clear direction.
- ✓ Read this week's scripture passages together and guide your group through the "Discuss" questions to initiate meaningful dialogue around key concepts or insights from this week's message.
- ✓ Move your group discussion to a deeper level by leading them through questions in "Apply". Use discernment to customize these application questions to meet the needs & dynamics of your group.
NOTE: You do not have to cover all the questions provided in "Apply".
- ✓ Connect with God together as a group through this week's "prayer practice", which can be in the form of a prayer exercise or some guidance on what to pray for in relation to the message or application.

CHECK-IN	Did you pay attention to some of your thoughts this week? We learned last week that not all our thoughts are helpful or true. Did you happen to catch a thought that was unhelpful or untrue? What did you do with it?
BIG IDEA	Joy is not just found in those blissful moments when the stars happen to line up for us, but it can be found in the messy process of life when we are aware that God is at work in our lives, even in the most difficult circumstances. This requires us to reframe our thinking and change our focus. When we are able to look beyond what's in front of us and fix our eyes on Jesus (His path, His perspective, His power) that's when things will shift for us and we can see the goodness of God in all things.
DISCUSS	<p>Read the main Scripture, Philippians 1:12-28 together.</p> <hr/> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What stands out to you from this passage?2. Share about a time when you came up against something you didn't expect in life and how God used that experience to do something great in your life.3. When you are going through suffering, what is your self talk? Do you consider it a punishment or a privilege?

<p>APPLY</p> <p>How do we respond to God's teaching in meaningful ways? What might God ask of us in mind, spirit, or actions?</p>	<p>Choose two application activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. P. Brian shared that <i>joy is knowing that God is using our imperfect circumstances to work His perfect will into our lives</i>. How does your definition of joy currently line up with this idea?2. What are the Winnebagos that have come into your life? How can you move your chair or change your point of focus?3. Which of these 4 principles do you need to apply in order to shift your focus?<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Look beyond your moment to focus on the bigger picture● Look beyond people and focus on the big purpose● Look beyond the temporal and focus on the permanent● Look beyond the negative and focus on the positive
<p>PRAYER PRACTICE</p>	<p>As a group, or in pairs (depending on your comfort level), take turns to pray for your specific struggle and declare your faith. You can follow this model if you like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jesus, you know I am struggling in/with.... [name the area, problem, or challenge].● I ask that you give me your perspective to see my situation through your eyes so that I may look beyond... [name the principle you want to apply from question 3]● Your Word tells me that I can be confident knowing that you who began a good work in me will surely carry it on to completion and so I choose joy over fear, doubt, and defeat in this situation.