

CONNECT:

- What was your first job? Do you remember how much did you make an hour and what did it cost you to have fun (ie. go to the movies, to a game, etc).

PRAISE:

- Where have you seen God's faithfulness in your life and/or experienced joy this past week?

SCRIPTURE:

- Philippians 1:18-26

CONVERSATIONS

1. Do you think being a "disciple" is the same thing as being a "Christian"? What's the difference? Should every Christian be a disciple?
2. When you look at the near future (the next 6 months to a year) what kinds of feelings, questions, or fears do you have...
 - a. ...for you personally?
 - b. ... for us as the church?
3. Read Phil 1:21-23. Paul writes that "[his] desire is to depart."
 - a. Can you relate to Paul's sense of tiredness?
 - b. What do you tend to do when you feel tired in your discipleship? What has helped you feel refreshment?
4. Do you think it is getting harder to be a Christian in our culture? Where have you felt that pressure in your own life?
 - a. Do you find following Jesus to be "simple"? Why or why not?
5. How has following Jesus given you purpose in your life?
6. John Stott writes that "The mark of a justified believer is JOY".
 - a. Would you agree or disagree with this statement?
 - b. Is your faith marked by joy?
 - c. How do you experience joy, and how do you think God could use that for "*your progress in the faith*"?

PRACTICE (decide for yourself an area you commit to grow in this week or semester and share with your Community)

- **Count the Cost** - Take some time to pray through or journal the things which you'd be afraid to lose because of your faith. Bring those things to Jesus and consider the "cost of discipleship". Resolve to follow Jesus regardless of the cost.
 - **Further Reading:** *THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP* (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

- **Rejoice** - This week, set a timer for 5 minutes at the end of the day to remember every moment or interaction that brought you JOY. See how many you can get in the time, and when the timer goes off - make space to thank God for the good gifts he's given you, and reflect on how those gifts point you to Jesus.
- **Service** - Who has God placed in your life that you can serve "for their progress and joy in the faith"? Look for specific ways to love, encourage, empower, and pray for them. Ask God to give you the same kind of sacrificial love for them that Paul had for his Philippian brothers and sisters.

PRAYER

- For our Ridge Kids. That their families would continue to be committed to the discipleship of their children.
- For the maturity of our Community, that we would commit to grow in our faith this season.
- For the Ridge Church healthcare professionals, for their safety endurance and grace as they care for those battling COVID. That they would continue to be the face of hope & grace to their patients and peers.
- For our Ridge Church teachers, for their patience and persistence in joyfully serving the children they are teaching, guiding and caring for.

