

**Morning Star Church**  
**Devotional Guide**  
***The 4:8 Principle, Deepening***  
**July 5-9, 2010**

**Message Synopsis:** Pastor Keith continued our series on *The 4: 8 Principle* out of Philippians 4:8. Keith challenged us to consider how we can deepen and develop our joy. He taught to consider the source of our joy which is truly found only in Jesus. Once Christ becomes the source of our joy He starts eliminating the negative thoughts that rob our joy.

*Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

1 Peter 1:8-9, NIV

**Day 1 Jesus is JOY!**

Jeremiah 31:12-13; 1 Peter 1:6-9.

1. Pastor Keith talked about the difference between *happiness and joy*. What would be your description of the difference?
2. True joy is found only in Jesus. In reading 1 Peter, what did you discover about the growth of the Christ-follower that leads to True Joy?

**Day 2 Beginning the process of eliminating negative distortions**

Romans 8:5-6; Philippians 1:6; Philippians 3:12-14.

1. We can redirect thoughts that are not Christ-honoring. God intends for us to yield over our thoughts to the Holy Spirit's power so that He can bring life and peace. How do you go about yielding your thoughts over to the Holy Spirit's power?
2. According to Paul in Philippians *who* provides strength to us and direction for productive thinking? How does He provide that strength?

**Day 3 Faith is the fuel of eliminating *stinking thinking***

Hebrews 11:1, 6; James 2:17; Mark 5:24-34.

1. Negative, distorted thoughts always yield *stinking thinking* about what we cannot do. How do the Hebrews and James verses suggest we step forward into God's plan for our lives?
2. The story of the woman being healed by Jesus in Mark put her faith into action; the result was healing! How can you put your faith into action about some of the distorted thoughts that keep you imprisoned in doubt?

**Day 4 Positive Action # 1**

Psalms 77:11-12; Proverbs 23:7; Isaiah 26:3; Jeremiah 15:16.

1. Pastor Keith suggested we put into practice **positive mediation on the promises of God**. What does the psalmist suggest about our thoughts on God's Truths? How do we do that?
2. Jeremiah talks about a huge step in spiritual growth. What is it? How does this practice influence our thoughts?

**Day 5 Positive Action # 2**

Philemon 4-6; James 1:22; Proverbs 3:5-6.

1. Pastor Keith suggested we practice **positive speaking on what God said**. In Philemon 6, what does Paul challenge Philemon to be in? How would you practice that truth in your life?
2. The final positive action is **positive doing what the promises of God tell you to do**. How do James and Proverbs suggest you do this?

**Morning Star Church**  
**Small Group Discussion Guide**  
***The 4:8 Principle: Deepening***  
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**Group Icebreaker**

This week Pastor Keith encouraged us to meditate on the word of God and find our own “life verse.” Share with your group your life verse. What is it about this verse that speaks to you?

*Every time your name comes up in my prayers, I say, "Oh, thank you, God!" I keep hearing of the love and faith you have for the Master Jesus, which brims over to other believers. And I keep praying that this faith we hold in common keeps showing up in the good things we do, and that people recognize Christ in all of it. Friend, you have no idea how good your love makes me feel, doubly so when I see your hospitality to fellow believers. Philemon 6, The Message*

1. Pastor Keith talked about meditation. What images come to mind when you think of meditation? How can you add this spiritual practice to your daily life? As a group, read Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119:48, Psalm 145:5; What would happen if you spent more time meditating on the word of God?
2. Pastor Keith talked about the power of speaking positive language into our own lives and the lives of others. In what ways have you seen the power of positive conversation work in your daily life? How can we begin to speak more positivity into the lives of others? As a group, read Ephesians 4:29, Proverbs 16:24, Ecclesiastes 10:12; What are words you need to hear on a regular basis? Take a mental note of the words members of your small group need to hear. Spend a few minutes going around the room speaking the words members of your group need to hear.
3. Throughout this week’s study we have been practicing using words from the Bible in our everyday lives. What would happen if each of us would focus more on learning what the Bible has to say and applying it to our everyday life? As a group read James 1:22. Why is this verse so important? What keeps us from doing what the Bible instructs us to do? How would our lives be different if we were “doers of the word?”
4. Small Group Exercise: Break into groups of two. Practice speaking words of encouragement to each other by asking how you can pray for the other this week. Follow up mid-week to see how each other is doing.

**Prayer Requests**