

# Union

C H U R C H

## Groups | From A Prison To A Party

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### Get Started

Welcome to Spring Groups!! We are excited to do life with you! We pray that you find community that will create lifelong friendships!

**Icebreaker:** If you could give this season of your life a theme song, what would it be? Why?

### Start with

**Acts 16:25-30(NIV)**— “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone’s chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!” The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?””

## Make it Personal

This week, Pastor Brian Bullock, continued the fourth part of the series “The Joy That I Had.” Pastor Brian impressed on us that as believers we must find the place of praise in the moment of pain. He reminded us that joy is not a mood or a vibe, but a fruit of the spirit. The same joy that you get from a raise on the job, is the same joy you need to access when you get laid off!

The cheat code to maintain your joy is community.

- **Point 1: Don't Go Through Storms By Yourself.** Even with all the power and vision that Paul had, he still needed a Silas.
  - Q – Who is your “Silas”?
  - Q – What do you think stops people from being vulnerable?
  - Q – Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12(NKJV). When you consider that a three stranded cord is not easily broken, why do you believe the enemy would not want you in community?
- **Point 2: Find People Who Won't Let You Throw A Pity Party.** Find people who will drag you out of the house if necessary, not let you stay down or let you complain forever.
  - Q – Why do you think people throw pity parties?
  - Q – Read Acts 16:26-28, at first glance, where do you believe the miracle in this story lies?
- **Point 3: When People See Real Joy In You, They Will Want What You Have.** There are people who are watching you and wondering how you are going through all that you are going through but you still have joy.
  - Q – Read Matthew 5:14-16. What does this verse say about the purpose of shining our light?
  - Q – Pastor Brian said “many of us, when life hits, we try to mute our lives so that no one hears our suffering.” Why do people so often choose isolation over community?

### Takeaway Points:

- Find the place of praise in the moment of pain.
- Joy is not a mood or vibe, it's a fruit of the spirit.
- Joy is not a good idea, it's an expectation.
- When I'm not in joy, I'm not in His will.
- It's not easy to stay joyful but it's your responsibility.
- Joy is maintained when you are in relationship with joy filled people.
- If you struggle with joy, it's most likely because you spend too much time in isolation.
- We don't want people to see us in our suffering/vulnerable so we don't let them in.
- God is going to use you to show someone watching you that He can open a door.

### Activity:

Give your groups 5 minutes to write down a practical next step from today's discussion.

### **Prayer Requests**

- Ask your group members to share any prayer requests they have.
- Pray and close out your group.

### **Reminders**

- Be sure to take attendance today!
- Continue to add and accept people to your group.

### **Announcements**

- Easter is NEXT Sunday! Invite a friend and reserve your seats!  
<https://theunionchurch.com/easter/>
- Men's Night is coming April 19<sup>th</sup>! Invite all the men you know and reserve your seats!  
<https://theunionchurch.com/events>