

— weekly —
**STUDY
GUIDE**

100 HAPPY PEOPLE WEEK 3 // *Accept One Another*

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Introduction

Welcome to week three of the 100 Happy People study. As followers of Jesus, we are called to love each other, our neighbors, and even our enemies. Unfortunately, some modern-day Christians have developed a nasty reputation for being judgmental, hypocritical, and simply out of touch with the real world. Some of these allegations seem harsh and unfair, but in many ways we've earned these labels. Only God has the authority to deem people righteous or unrighteous. Our job is to accept people right where they are and leave the rest up to God.

In this guide you will find questions for your own personal study along with questions to discuss at a Bible study, neighborhood gathering, or at the dinner table with family and friends. Enjoy!

Personal Study

READ

Read John 4:1-42 and consider the questions below.

CONSIDER

- Samaritans were a despised people group 2000+ years ago. During this time period, highly religious Jews went out of their way to avoid them. Although these labels have changed, this self-righteous behavior can be found in today's churches. In our current culture, what groups of people are categorized, labeled, ostracized?

- As an ambassador of Christ, what would it look like to "accept" people who are mistreated by today's society?

Personal Study Continued...

- Has there ever been a time when you received love and acceptance when you felt it was undeserved? How did it impact you?

READ

Read Romans 3:10-23 and consider the questions below.

CONSIDER

- Self-righteousness is a dangerous attitude that sneakily works its way into our hearts and minds. In what ways does this passage keep us grounded in the truth?

- Is there a person you habitually avoid (family, co-worker, or neighbor) who you'd like to be one of the 100 people you make happy this week? What is your plan?

PRAY

Pray that God would enable you to see people like he sees them. Pray for doors to open this week with people who you've previously excluded. Pray that God would fill you with his love, acceptance, grace, and truth.

Group Study

ICE BREAKER

Discuss this question as a group. Who is the hardest person in your life to love (i.e. mother-in-law, supervisor, neighbor with the barking Chihuahua, or politician)?

Previously we learned four steps to bringing happiness through encouragement:

1. Greet kindly.
2. Listen intently.
3. Praise specifically.
4. Celebrate generously.

Discuss the questions below with your group:

- What new insights or questions about happiness did the Holy Spirit bring to mind over the last week?
- In what ways did you attempt to bring happiness to the people in your life? How did they respond? What worked? What did not?

READ

Read Luke 6:27-42 and discuss the questions below:

DISCUSS

- Of all the verses in this passage, which one speaks to you the most? Explain why.
- According to verses 37 and 38, the amount we'll be judged by God is in direct proportion to the amount we judge others. Is this a scary realization? What are some practices that might help transform a judgmental heart into a more loving and accepting one?

CASE STUDY

Use the following case study as a model for a real life situation to put this week's lesson into practice.

Jaren recently bought his dream house. A year after he and his wife moved in, they received a new neighbor, a single man named Joe. Their first introduction went well. Through a few minutes of small talk they learned that Joe works long hours and is rarely home. When he is not at work he is usually out fishing.

"Perfect," thought Jaren. "Our last neighbor was a loud and obnoxious jerk! This will be great."

What they didn't anticipate was the eyesore Joe's yard would become over the next few months. Everyone in the neighborhood kept their yards neatly cut and watered to a perfect shade of green. Joe's was hideously overgrown and brown.

Needless to say, Jaren is furious and doesn't know what to do.

Using the scriptures from this study guide, what could you say and do to help Jaren and his wife?

Group Study Continued...

PRAY

Pray the following prayer together as a group, and commit to praying this prayer every morning this week before you start your day.

Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace

Lord, make me (us) an instrument of your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me (us) sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is discord, harmony;
Where there is error, truth;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, Grant that I (we) may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
—Prayer of Saint Francis