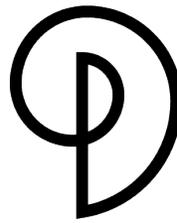


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Joy

November 18 & 19, 2023

Miriam is packing her bags. She is fleeing with her people to freedom, and of all the things she could have brought, she packs her tambourine. She is planning for joy. She is planning for the spiritual fruit of joy to be born in her life, and as she leads her people, she models for them what the spiritual fruit of joy looks like. The Spirit Life of joy... pack for it.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: EXODUS 15:20-21

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

Miriam is the middle sister right in between the oldest - and more famous - Aaron, and the younger - and way more famous - Moses. You might remember Miriam as the sister that watched Moses float in a basket down a river in an attempt to save his life. This is the Miriam that, when the Pharaoh's daughter found the basket, arranged for Moses' mom to be the wet nurse for Moses, who was her own son. Miriam was a very clever big sister. Miriam's name can mean "to see water." Jewish tradition hails Miriam as the one who knew where the water was throughout the Israelites' 40 years of travels in the wilderness. But perhaps the most memorable thing about Miriam is that she packed her tambourine before fleeing captivity in Egypt. She was prepared for joy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share a story of a time that you were NOT prepared for something. What were the consequences of your lack of preparation? What did you learn from the experience?
- Work together to summarize what we've learned in this series about some key Biblical characters and the fruits of the Spirit that their life stories exemplify: Esther-self-control, Ruth-patience, Zacchaeus-peace, Tabitha-kindness, Philemon-love, Miriam-joy. Which character do you most closely identify with and why? Which character did you learn the most from? What did you learn? Up to this point in your life, which fruit of the Spirit does your life story exemplify? (See Galatians 5:22-23)
- How has God "parted the Red Sea" in your life and brought you safely through to the other side? What was your response? Were you prepared for joy? How did you express your gratitude?
- Miriam teaches us that "no matter what army is coming after you, no matter what you're backed up against, be prepared for joy." What are you currently "backed up against" in your life? How can this group support you and help you plan for joy?

CHALLENGE: This week, break out your tambourine and express joy for all God has done and all that God is doing in your life. For verse 2, express joy for all God has done and all that God is doing through Prince of Peace.