The HABITS of HAPPINESS
UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDY GUIDE

Here is a brief explanation of the features of this study guide.

CHECKING IN: You will open each meeting with an opportunity for everyone to check in with each other about how you are doing with the weekly assignments. Accountability is a key to success in this study!

KEY VERSE: Each week you will find a key verse or Scripture passage for your group to read together. If someone in the group has a different translation, ask them to read it aloud so the group can get a bigger picture of the meaning of the passage.

VIDEO LESSON: There is a video lesson for the group to watch together each week. Fill in the blanks in the lesson outlines as you watch the video, and be sure to refer back to these outlines during your discussion time.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS: Each video segment is complemented by several questions for group discussion. Please don’t feel pressured to discuss every single question. There is no reason to rush through the answers. Give everyone ample opportunity to share their thoughts. If you don’t get through all of the discussion questions, that’s okay.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE: This is where the rubber meets the road. We don’t want to be just hearers of the Word. We also need to be doers of the Word (James 1:22). These assignments are application exercises that will help you put into practice the truths you have discussed in the lesson.

PRAYER DIRECTION: At the end of each session you will find suggestions for your group prayer time. Praying together is one of the greatest privileges of small group life. Please don’t take it for granted.
A Tip for the Host
The study guide material is meant to be your servant, not your master. The point is not to race through the sessions; the point is to take time to let God work in your lives. Nor is it necessary to “go around the circle” before you move on to the next question. Give people the freedom to speak, but don’t insist on it. Your group will enjoy deeper, more open sharing and discussion if people don’t feel pressured to speak up.
Follow these simple steps for a successful small group meeting:

- Open your group meeting by using the **Checking In** section of your study guide.

- Watch the video lesson together and follow along in the outlines in this study guide. Each video lesson is about 25 minutes long.

- Complete the rest of the discussion materials for each session. Be sure to review the **Putting It Into Practice** section and commit to fulfilling any action steps before your next session.

- Close your time together by following the **Prayer Direction** suggestions.
SESSION 1

GROWING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

CHECKING IN

If this is your first time to meet as a group, or if you have any new group members, be sure to introduce yourselves.

Think of someone who has been an encouragement to you, who expected the best of you. How did that person’s confident expectations influence your life?

KEY VERSE

“Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God.”

Philippians 1:3 (NLT)
FIVE LAWS OF HAPPINESS

1. Don’t look for happiness; ___________________.

2. Happiness is not ________________.

3. ________________ create my happiness.

4. Happiness based on happenings is ________________. But happiness built on habits is _________________.

5. ________________ habits are as addicting as bad habits.
“This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. I am writing to all of God’s holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus, including the elders and deacons. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. God knows how much I love you and long for you with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus.

I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ’s return. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation — the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ — for this will bring much glory and praise to God.”

Philippians 1:1-11 (NLT)
FOUR RELATIONAL HABITS OF HAPPINESS

1. I must __________________________ for the people in my life.

“Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God.”

Philippians 1:3 (NLT)

“I thank God for the help you gave me . . .”

Philippians 1:5 (NCV)

Happiness Hint: Remember ________________,
and _________________.

2. __________________________ for the people in my life.

“Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy.”

Philippians 1:4 (NLT)
Happiness Hint: The quickest way to change a bad relationship to a good one, ______________________________ 
__________________________________________________________________________.

“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”

Philippians 1:9-11 (NIV)

Four Things to Pray for People

• They will ________________________________.
• They will ________________________________.
• They will ________________________________.
• They will ________________________________.
• They will ________________________________.

“. . . filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”

Philippians 1:11 (NIV)

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”

Galatians 5:22-23a (NIV)
3. _________________________________ from people in my life.

“... being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 1:6 (NIV)

Three Ways Paul Brought the Best out of People

• He ________________________________.
• He ________________________________.
• He was ________________________________.

Happiness Hint: Celebrate ________________________________
________________________ rather than judging them for ________________________________.

“It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart.”

Philippians 1:7a (NIV)
4. Love people in my life

“God is my witness that I tell the truth when I say that my deep love for you all comes from the heart of Christ Jesus himself.”

Philippians 1:8 (TEV)

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

1. Pastor Rick teaches that happiness is not the goal but rather the result of developing Christ-like relational habits. Which habits are already part of your daily routine? Which one is the most difficult for you to practice?

2. One of the Happiness Hints teaches to celebrate how far people have come rather than judging them for how far they still have to go. Why is this easier said than done?
3. Often when people are irritating, you want them to change. Instead of wishing they would change, you are called to pray for them. Have you ever tried doing this? If so, how did it help?

4. People need others to believe in them, because it's how everyone changes. Acceptance always precedes transformation. How will you apply this truth to one of your most important relationships this week?

**PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

Human beings are not grateful by nature. The longer you know someone, the more likely you are to take that person for granted. God's antidote for this is gratitude. Discuss ideas that will help you begin to develop a habit of expressing gratitude for the people in your life. If you already do this, share your experience with the group.

**PRAYER DIRECTION**

Discuss how your group wants to approach prayer during this six-week study. Encourage everyone to share ideas. Consider asking if anyone has a desire to be a prayer champion for the group. This could include summarizing and sending out prayer requests weekly, but you can openly talk about other ways to support each other in prayer.