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## **Thoughtful**

Featuring  
**Ashley Engle**

*Session 1: Think Kingdom Thoughts*

 **Session 2: Think Joyful Thoughts**

*Session 3: Think Hopeful Thoughts*

*Session 4: Think Grateful Thoughts*

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To view the accompanying videos for this series,  
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What are you thinking?

# Thoughtful

Session Two  
Think Joyful Thoughts

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*In this session, we will explore the idea of finding joy in all things. We will look around at our own lives and find people, places, and things that bring us joy. The story of Paul and Silas will challenge us to “count it all joy” as we face trials and tribulations in life. Now that we’ve discovered Kingdom thoughts, it’s time to add a little joy into our lives!*

1. What word would you hope people would use to describe you?
2. What is something you do with your children that brings you the greatest joy?
3. Who in your life is the greatest example of someone who thinks joyful thoughts?

Take a moment to send a text to that person to let them know you’re thankful for the example of joy that they are in your life.

**Read James 1:2-4.**

**James 1:2-4 ESV** Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

4. What does James mean when he says to “count it all joy”?
5. In what specific part of your life do you struggle to “count it all joy”?

Ashley spoke about the idea that “joy is a mindset, not an emotion.” We cannot feel emotions on command, but we can find joy in the deep-seated contentment that we choose.

6. Think about your life. Is there a place where you could choose to be content but you are not?

Ashley shared about her struggle with anxiety and how she can now see the good that came from it. Because she lived it, she can speak about it and offer encouragement to others. If you can't see the good yet, don't be discouraged.

**Read Romans 8:28.**

**Romans 8:28 ESV** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

7. What one word sticks out to you in this verse and why?
8. How have you seen this verse play out in your life as God works all things together for good?

Oftentimes we might find ourselves struggling to believe that we deserve for God to work things together for our good. These negative thoughts we think about ourselves can easily distract us from joyful thoughts.

9. What is one negative thought you think about yourself the most?
  
10. After you identify that thought, ask yourself:  
Who told me this?  
  
Why did I hold onto it?
  
11. What could you do as a single mom to teach your children about thinking joyful thoughts?
  
12. What is one thing you are walking away with from this week?

**As you reflect on today's study, take a listen to “Better” by Pat Barrett.**

Join us for the next session of **Thoughtful**, where Ashley will discuss how we can remain hopeful during difficult times. We'll consider the things we have learned about Kingdom thoughts and joyful thoughts and then discover how capturing hopeful thoughts can make a meaningful difference in our lives.

*To share your thoughts regarding this study, contact us at [info@ariseministries.net](mailto:info@ariseministries.net).*

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Ashley and her husband Jeff have three kids: two sons, ages 10 and 12, and one daughter, age 7. She is a full-time seminary student, but in the past she has worked in the museum world, in television, as a teacher, and in ministry. In her spare time (should she ever have any), she enjoys reading and writing, eating good food with friends and family, studying the Enneagram, and exploring new places.