

TAKEAWAY

Roadmap

Finding Joy When Life is Tough

FROM HOPE TO JOY
SUNDAY 6TH JUNE 2021

INTRODUCTION

On Sunday, we looked at the idea of finding joy even amidst suffering. We said that joy is different from short-term highs and long-term comfortable happiness.

DISCUSS

1. What things really bring you joy? Make a list as long as you can!
2. How much have you experienced joy in the last year or so?
3. Our culture often pushes us towards short-term positive feelings (highs) or long-term comfort (happiness). How is joy different from these things?

READ

James 1:1-4

EXPLAIN

In the first few verses of James, the author speaks about approaching our suffering with joy. This may sound like a very strange idea to us. The Greek word James uses for 'trials' means a broad range of things; covering poverty, sickness, injustice, grief. The Greek word James uses for 'faith' could be best described as 'allegiance'. It is more about commitment to a person (in this case God) than agreeing with some ideas or facts. James's overall goal is for us to find maturity

DISCUSS

4. What is James really pushing towards in this section? What does he want his readers to grasp?
5. Have you ever found joy even in the middle of great suffering? What happened? How is it that you came to experience joy?
6. How does suffering test our faith? How could this be a good thing for us?
7. How do you think James's personal knowledge of Jesus shaped how he saw suffering and joy?
8. Is there anyone your group could pray for right now who could do with some joy amidst suffering? (Be careful around confidentiality, of course).

NOTES FOR LEADERS

The aim of this session is to help people engage with what it means to have joy in everyday life - and especially when suffering. Many will struggle with the idea of finding joy amidst their difficulties, and it's important to be clear that James is not saying suffering is good - just that it can be used to mature us so that even in the hardest things we can still find joy in the growing effect it has on us.