



The Harvest

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Choose Joy

Joy is always a choice. There is a stark contrast between joy and happiness for that reason. Happiness is circumstantial in nature. The feeling that comes with positive circumstances is what we call happiness. Joy is something different entirely. Joy comes from deep-seated contentment and trust in the promises of God. Joy does not hinge upon success, promotions, relationships, careers, or any other blessing God could pour out. In fact, the Bible says that joy occurs in the face of opposition:

*“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.”
~ James 1:2-3 ~*

When we hear the word “joy”, we tend to think about the beautiful moments in life we’ve experienced. Conversely, Paul is saying here that we are to view our trials as those joyful moments.

Pause: What needs to change in your heart for you to be able to view your trials as joys? If you don’t know immediately, spend some time with the Lord and ask Him to reveal this.

One of the most powerful tools we have as believers is faith. **When we trust in God, joy overflows.** He is the One deserving of praise and is trustworthy in all of life’s various circumstances – good and bad.

Read 1 Peter 1:8-9 – He gives us joy as we focus on and choose to believe in Who He is and the promises He has given to us, His people.

Read Romans 15:13 – The key here is trust. When we trust and choose to have a joy-based mindset, God provides peace and hope! All of these attributes are essential to the life of a believer. Joy is what we choose to hold onto. Peace and hope are the end result.

Living this out practically on a day-to-day basis may be our biggest challenge. We will not always feel happy. We will not always experience moments that make us want to choose joy. One mindset shift that can help facilitate a lifestyle of joy is changing the way we view God’s blessings. Whether we recognize

