



Greater Things

Joy - Part 2 Study Guide

We tend to think that the opposite of joy is conflict. If there is tension in a relationship, if there's a sickness in our body, if there's a struggle in our life...there can't possibly be joy, right? Well this week we will discuss how we can have joy IN and THROUGH our conflicts. Actually, it is through our conflicts that God can bring us the greatest joy!

1. Think back on a time when you accomplished something awesome. How did it feel to overcome the obstacles involved in that situation?

“...In all our affliction, I am overflowing with joy.”
- 2 Corinthians 7:4b (ESV)

2. **Read 2 Corinthians 7:4 and James 1:2-4.** We naturally tend to hide from conflict. Paul mentions how he has great joy even in all his affliction. James notes that our trials help grow us. Where is an area of conflict in your life and how can you change your perspective to let that situation grow you?

“But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us...”
- 2 Corinthians 7:6a (ESV)

3. **Read 2 Corinthians 7:5-6 and 2 Corinthians 1:3.** Here Paul describes feelings that many of us have. Fear. Anxiety. Sickness. Tiredness. In an attempt to remedy these ourselves, we turn to many different outlets: TV, free time, alcohol, extra relationships, spending money, etc... However, Paul tells us where true, lasting joy and comfort come from: “God who comforts the downcast.” What is a struggle in your life or a method of coping that you need to give up to God so He can begin to comfort you?

4. **Read 2 Corinthians 7:6-7.** We learn here that God uses people to comfort us. Paul was comforted by Titus. Titus didn't even have to do or say anything; just being present gave Paul joy. Of course, Titus did use his words to encourage Paul as well. Think about the people in your life. Who has God used to comfort you? Who has God placed in your life to comfort?

5. Life groups are an amazing place to get connected with the people God wants to use in our lives. As a group, discuss how you can be intentional about inviting people to experience life group this week. Or maybe you feel God is asking you to step out and be a life group leader. Discuss and pray about that with your current life group leader and see where God leads you!