

Faithful Instructions: Rejoice Always

Ice Breaker: What was the happiest moment of your childhood? What made you happy?

Note: Pastor Dave begins this sermon with 2 sets of facts: Fewer Americans today than ever before identify themselves as Christians or even religious, and Suicide has replaced homicide as the leading cause of deaths among teens and young adults over the past decade.

1. Do you think the two are related? Why or why not?
2. According to Romans 5:1-5 How does faith and suffering bring peace and hope to the believer?

Romans 5:1-5 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. ³Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

3. How does rejoicing always, praying continually, and giving thanks help us to overcome hopelessness in difficult times?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all*

circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

4. What does this passage say is the will of God for you?

The focus of this lesson is verse 16: **Rejoice always.**

5. Is it possible to have happiness without joy or vice versa? Explain.
6. What brings us happiness? What brings us joy?
7. What is the source of our joy as Christians? (Romans 5:11, Philippians 3:3, Luke 10:20, John 15:10-11)

Rom 5:11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Luke 10:20 ²⁰ However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

John 15:10-11 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."

8. How does understanding that God is using your life story to fit into God's big story enable you to rejoice always even when you are unhappy?

Pastor Dave taught that for the believer there is triumph over tragedy through the choice of joy.

9. What is the significance of having the ability to choose joy, over letting circumstances dictate our feelings, mean to you?
10. How does choosing joy bring triumph over tragedy? (James 1:2-4, Philippians 4:4, Matthew 5:11-12, Romans 12:12)

James 1:2-4 ² Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. ⁴ Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

*Philippians 4:*⁴ **Rejoice in the Lord always.**

Matthew 5:11-12 ¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² **Rejoice** and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Romans 12:12 ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

11. What keeps us from choosing joy? Practically, how do you choose joy in difficult times?
12. Given that joy is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), are you participating with His work in you by choosing joy? If you're not living with joy, ask yourself why not?

Galatians 5:22-23 ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

13. How is it possible to suffer, be sad, or grieve and still be joyful? (2 Corinthians 6:10; John 16:22-24; Romans 8:35-39)

2 Corinthians 6:10 ¹⁰ sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

John 16:22-24 ²² So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. ²³ In that day you will no longer ask me

anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

Romans 8:34-39³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?³⁶ As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

14. What is keeping you from choosing to rejoice always? What can you do this week to encourage yourself and others to rejoice always?