



From Here to There

Joy

Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Peter 1:3-9

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The call to joy

The challenge to joy

The foundation of joy

The practice of joy



Overview

Jesus said that he came that we might have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10). For far too many people, this does not seem to be the case. Too few experience real joy. Sadly we often settle for the variety of substitutes for joy that our world offers, things like pleasure or momentary excitement. What then is real joy and how do we find it? Is there anything I can do to cultivate it? This is what we are exploring this week.

Engaging with each other

1. What is the most exciting event (concert, sporting event, personal or family experience) you have ever witnessed or been a part of?

Engaging with the Bible

1. Galatians 5:22 identifies joy as a fruit of the Spirit. Read Philippians 4:4 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16 and contrast what these verses say about joy.
2. What does 2 Corinthians 8:2 say about the relationship between joy and circumstances?
3. Read Psalm 13:5, Psalm 16:11, and John 15:11. What is the common theme in these verses describing the foundation of joy?

Engaging with our lives

1. Which challenge to joy are you most prone to experience?
 - a. Numbing
 - b. Settling for substitutes
 - c. Looking to the past
 - d. Fear of what the future may hold
2. Take 5 minutes and make a list of as many things as you can think of for which you are thankful (continue on the back if needed). Did you run out of time or out of things to be thankful for?
3. Read aloud together 1 Peter 1:3-9 (below)

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for us, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In all this we greatly rejoice, though now for a little while we may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that the proven genuineness of our faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Though we have not seen him, we love him; and even though we do not see him now, we believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for we are receiving the end result of our faith, the salvation of our souls.