Lesson Six: Joy Even In Suffering

Drawing Near

The church is under siege in most cultures of the world, especially in what is now called the two-thirds world. What is most amazing about the suffering of our brothers and sisters worldwide is the way they continue to serve the Lord with tremendous joy and zeal. In many of these places, the church is actually thriving and flourishing! How do you explain this? How is it that those who suffer for the name of Christ can endure it with joy?

How do you tend to respond to the daily difficulties in your life? Check the ways that apply to you.

___ grumbling
___ trying to fix it
___ discouragement
___ faith in God’s plan
___ questioning, why me?
___ worry and anxiety
___ joy
Unleashing The Text

1. What does this passage say about the inevitability of suffering for Christians? Is it normal or not? Why?

2. What does it mean to partake of Christ’s suffering?

3. Peter mentions the possibility of glorifying God in the midst of suffering. How is this possible?
4. **What does Peter mean by saying that “judgment...begins at the house of God” (v.17)?**

Exploring The Meaning

5. **What does it mean to count all trials as joy?**

6. **What, according to James, are some “positive” results of suffering?**
7. **Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. What was Paul’s experience of Christ in the midst of great suffering?**

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**Reflecting On The Text**

8. **What benefits have you received from going through a time of suffering? In what ways have you experienced God’s supportive grace in tough times?**

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9. **How can you improve your “joy quotient” in times of suffering? How can trusting God lead to real joy?**

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10. Peter encouraged his persecuted brethren to “commit their souls” to their “faithful Creator.” Explain what this means as though you were giving encouragement to a friend who was going through suffering.

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11. What sobers you most as you consider the truths taught in this passage? What encourages you most? Why?

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**Personal Response**

Write out additional reflections, questions you may have, or a prayer.

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Prayer Requests

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