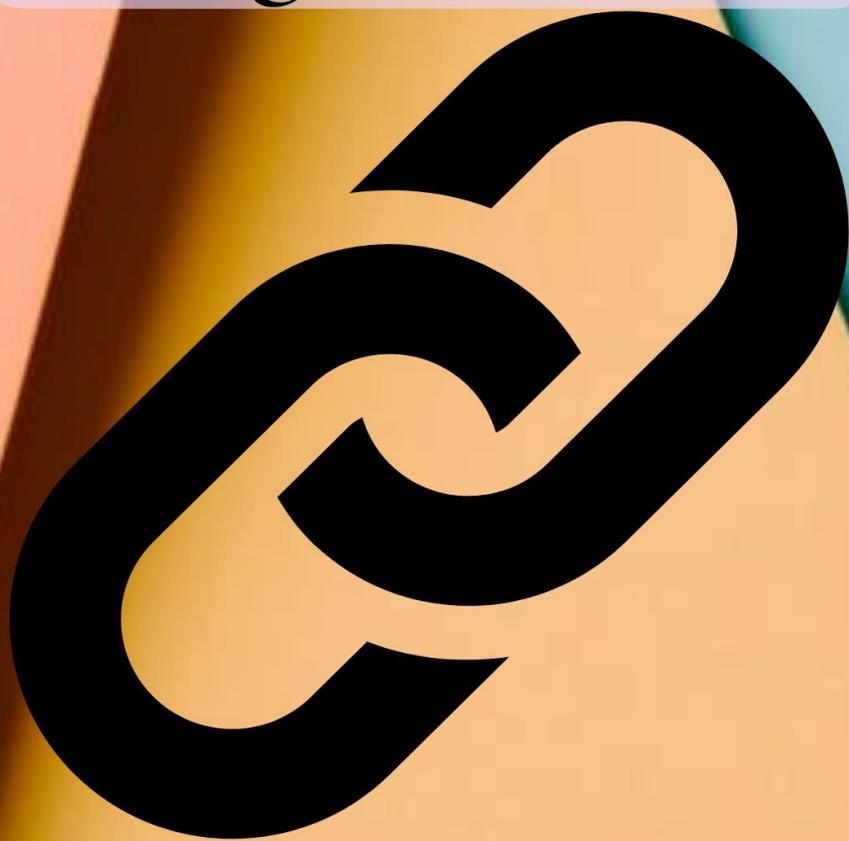


3 1 Days
Together



JOY

Thank you!

Thank you for choosing to pick this booklet up and start 2023 in a season of unity as well as joy. Each day for the month of January we will join together to understand, discover, and walk in joy.

This booklet can serve as a companion to a current study you are doing, a way to start your morning with the Lord, or a tool used at the end of the day to evaluate joy in your life.

The goal of this booklet is for you to engage with biblical joy in a personal way, knowing that you are joining together with the rest of Maranatha to truly seek after the Lord and understand joy from his perspective.

Our prayer is that Maranatha would be known for an outpouring of joy in every way this year. We want our neighbors, relatives, and friends to see the joy of the Lord on display through our lives. We are praying for you as you journey through this booklet.

-Maranatha Elders

WHEN ALL ELSE FADES...THE LORD REMAINS

Because of this simple yet profound truth, it is vital that you remember you can find joy in nothing around you, no earthly relationship, no circumstance, and no life stage. All of these will eventually fade and disappear.

The Joy of the Lord is always present.

Read *Psalms 16:1-11*

It is easy to take your “joy temperature” based on your life situation. God’s powerful Word reminds you that in His Presence the fullness of joy can be had. There is no void the Joy of the Lord cannot fill. Nothing is lacking in His Joy.

- *What or who do you find yourself looking to instead of God to fill your joy jar?*
-
-
-

Spend time in the Presence of the Lord in prayer. Ask Him to help you refocus today and replant your joy in Him alone.

The Joy of the Lord

January 2, 2023

Imagine being exhausted after months of hard work (maybe you don't have to imagine very hard!). In the book of Nehemiah the people of Israel were led back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the once great city and reestablish it as the great beacon of the Lord. After long days and hard nights the build was complete.

What a relief! With tired arms, blistered hands, and worn-out minds Nehemiah gathers the people to hear the word of God. Then, in response to what is read, he decrees a celebration! Although a sturdy and firm wall was built, their strength did not come from the rocks. Their strength did not come from their resolve. The joy of knowing God was their strength.

It can be your strength today as well. Your strength is not ultimately found in your own hands, your bank account, or your lifestyle. Your true strength can only be found when you look to God and enjoy him.

Read *Nehemiah 8:8-12*

- *When you think about the Lord, what character or attribute of his comes to mind and gives you strength?*
-
-

- *Is there a verse or passage that strengthens you? Who can you share it with?*
-
-

As you are able, listen to *Joy of the Lord* by Rend Collective today and let this song be the anthem of your day!

Merriam-Webster defines “REJOICE” as:
to give joy, to feel joy, or great delight.

At the end of Paul’s letter to the church at Philippi, there is a fitting section of encouragement and final guidance. Before jumping into topics like anxiety, prayer, thankfulness, and even the peace of God he makes this bold command:

Read *Philippians 4:4-7*

When you rejoice in the Lord (or find great delight in the Lord) your prayer will be impacted. Your anxiety will change. Your thankfulness and peace will be different than this world. Your life is altered when you rejoice in the Lord *first* because your eyes are full of Him!

When you take your greatest delight in your family, job, or even your own dedication to spiritual disciplines rather than God himself, you will find the joy you receive from those things to be temporary and ultimately unsatisfying. Families grow and shrink, jobs change, and as dedicated as you may try to be, your spiritual enemy still wages war.

When you take your greatest delight in the Lord, you will never be left unsatisfied because God is constant, always faithful, steadfast in love, and unwavering.

- *How can you publicly show your delight in the Lord today? What would be a practical, physical demonstration of you rejoicing in the Lord?*
-
-

The Joy of the Lord

January 4, 2023

Is the joy of the Lord a reaction to what God has done or an anticipation for what he is about to do?

Read *1 Chronicles 16:8-12* to find the answer.

Hopefully you saw the answer is a both-and-situation. Verse 12 commands you to remember while verse 10 calls upon the “seekers” to rejoice in the Lord.

If you are like most people, you likely struggle to maintain the balance between looking ahead with enthusiasm and looking back with gratitude. Either your focus tends to be on the next thing, or your mind wanders back to the good-ole-days. While neither are inherently wrong, without a proper balance, your spiritual alignment gets affected. When you look back more than you look ahead you lack a God-sized vision & excitement for how he plans to make all things new. When you run ahead without pausing to look back you quickly begin to think the ultimate vision of God rests on your shoulders and abilities.

Today, rejoice in the past *and* rejoice in what lies ahead.

- *What comes to mind as you praise God for his past faithfulness?*

- *What excites you about seeking the Lord and the way in which he is currently using you?*

The Joy in Salvation

January 5, 2023

Have you ever had a complaint or unpleasant situation come into your life or mind and let it stew over and over?

It's easy to dwell on the negative in life. The prophet Habakkuk speaks to God, or rather complains to him, about his life and situations. However, after dialoging with the Lord, Habakkuk is a changed man. Look how he concludes his conversation with God in *Habakkuk 3:17-19*.

One of the great things about this set of verses is that Habakkuk does not throw away reality and live in unrealistic bliss. In verse 17 the possibility of famine and lack in life is acknowledged yet in verse 18 an exchange is made. The prophet brings the issues into the presence of the Lord and walks out with the reminder that no matter the challenge, there is a Great Savior!

Have you made that exchange in your life? Today, bring your difficult situation, your mental anguish, and ultimately your sin into the presence of God. When you do, you will be able to walk away rejoicing in the Great and Only Savior! Below, list some things you need to leave at the altar of God right now:

The Joy in Salvation

January 6, 2023

It's hard to think about joy and salvation and not have the following passage come to mind. It is the world's most important, life-altering, joy-filled, and needed announcement of all time! It was bigger than the Armistice on November 11th, 1918, which at the time was considered the end of the "war to end all wars" after World War I. It holds more joy than a reunion and is full of happiness that far surpasses any parade. It unites the unlikely and brings all people to a level, common ground. It was spoken with more authority than a governmental decree yet with gentleness towards an audience who deserved no grace or mercy. It was a declaration for the ages and is never more appropriate for your life right now. Do you know what it is?

Read *Luke 2:10-11*

A Savior has come! No, THE Savior has come! Do you know him? Can you rejoice in this good news of great joy? Sing, draw, shout, write, serve, do something today to let the world see the joy in you. The Savior of the world has come! Use the space below creatively.

The Joy in Salvation

January 7, 2023

If only every day was a celebration. How each neighborhood would change if there was reason to celebrate and join together in harmony each day.

While the basis of this idea exists for all who believe in the Lord Jesus and receive him as Savior, the expression or even internal celebratory emotions are not constant.

Read *Psalm 13* and get a glimpse into David's mind as he speaks to God.

You have experienced a bad day, a rough moment, or a difficult season in your life at some point. Mentally, it's easy as humans to stop at verse 4. Don't! Just as David did not stop with the burdened feeling, you also need to move beyond feelings and into truth.

Verse 5 highlights the truth that there will be a rejoicing in a final salvation. Verse 6 promises a chorus will erupt because of the truth of who God is and what he has done. Don't stop in sorrow, sprint towards the eternal salvation, and rejoice today!

Below, write some truths about God and his work in your life that you need to hold tight today.

The Joy in Salvation

January 8, 2023

While the conversation of salvation tends to be an intimate and personal endeavor, this is not the only picture given in Scripture. Take a look at *Revelation 19:1*.

The word *hallelujah* is used in the Bible as an expression of worship or rejoicing. In this brief vision of eternity with the Lord, you see the joy in salvation extended from the individual to the masses. The joy in salvation does not find its end in the one, rather, the beauty of salvation is best seen when we look to the left and to the right and behold the endless sea of people to whom God has extended his salvation.

Rejoice today in your brothers and sisters in Christ. Let there be joy in *their* salvation. Write down a few fellow believers that quickly come to mind below.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Are there still more you hope to rejoice with in salvation? Who do you know right now that has not received salvation? Intercede, pray to God for them. Write their names below.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Finally, pause in prayer and thank God for those whom you can rejoice with and pray for those still needing salvation.

The Joy in Worship

January 9, 2023

Yes, worship is more than music. However, worship without music is incomplete according to God's design. In fact, take this a step further and it's clear that within God's design corporate worship should include every worshipper singing praise to God. Every? Every!

Read *Psalms 92:1-4*

This song was written for the Sabbath. It was written for the joining of worshippers to sing praises to God. Verse 1 makes the clear, albeit obvious, declaration that it is indeed *good* to sing praises. Verse 4 states that joy accompanies your song when you think of all God has done.

Here's a question for you: When should you sing? All day long! From morning to evening let your song of worship flow from a grateful heart.

A challenge for you today: Make worship music a constant throughout your day. As often as you are able, let your ears be full of praise for God, then take joy in him.

If you need a playlist, using your phone, scan the playlist below.



The Joy in Worship

January 10, 2023

Psalm 100

Joyful noise
From unclean lips
How can I make a sound

Birtherd in me
It's but a whisper
To the one who wears the crown

BUT

Renewed, Redeemed
Bought by the Blood
Of the One and Only King

My soul proclaims
I am his!
Earth, hear me sing

Join with me
In thanks and praise
O Sheep of his pasture

The Lord is Good
Faithful in every season
With love that lasts forever

Joyful noise
How can I keep
From making such a sound

The Joy in Worship

January 11, 2023

There are similarities to great joy and great fear. In both the heart races and the eyes widen. In either situation a resulting scream can be produced, or a clamping hush can come upon you. Perhaps this is part of the fascination with scary movies or thriller series. Is it possible though for fear and joy to dwell together?

Read *Matthew 28:5-10* and notice specifically verses 8 and 9.

The women in this passage experienced the divine fear that comes with a God-sized encounter and at the same time they experience the joy of the news they were told. As they wrestled between the two, they were met by Jesus and the only, natural response was to fall at his feet and worship.

When was the last time, out of joy, you fell at the feet of Jesus and worshipped? What reason do you have today to spend time on your knees before the Lord? Write below.

Worship God in joy knowing that you are worshipping One that is not buried in the tomb but is risen and alive forevermore!

God has always been the God of all nations. Reading the Old Testament may leave you thinking it was only Israel God truly cared for. Yet as you begin to see the larger story unfold a global redemption story comes into view. It becomes glaringly obvious that God is passionate for all people.

Read *Isaiah 56:6-8*

Have you ever experienced the family struggle of choosing a restaurant? When asking for suggestions, you get as many places as there are people (perhaps more!). It's easy to believe that this level of family chaos is just a taste of what it would be like if all nations really came together in worship. This, of course, is not true.

Verse 7 indicates an expected result from nations joining and gathering together for prayer, worship, and fellowship. That result is joy!

This might be a hard question for you: When you see someone who doesn't act like you, look like you, or speak like you, yet they join the church to worship and praise Jesus, is it easy for you to look past the differences and experience joy?

- *Who can you contact and encourage today?*
-
-

- *Who needs to experience the hospitality and joy of the church by being welcomed in and gathered as a part of God's family?*
-
-

When was the last time you experienced a muscle spasm? These spasms are contractions and a tightening of your muscles. They're relatively common, yet involuntary and unpredictable. If you think about the Church, have you ever known any "muscle-spasm-members?" Those are the members who are a bit unpredictable and who seem to do what they want in whatever situation they find themselves in. It's as if they do not know (or worse, don't care) what the rest of the body is doing. With this picture in mind, read *Philippians 2:1-4*.

Within Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, he expresses not only the desire of the Lord for believers to live humbly like Jesus, but the understanding that when this occurs, joy will ensue.

In Christ Jesus, each member, each believer, has the same mind and the same love. When you walk in that way with those around you, the joy of the Lord cannot help but spring up from within you and those on the outside watching will be filled with joy as well! How pleasant it is to see proper teamwork within a sport or unity through an orchestra will all types of unique instruments.

- *Who is God placing in your path today to give you the opportunity to count them as more significant than yourself?*
-
-

- *What might you need to sacrifice for the sake of lifting up your brothers and sisters in Christ?*
-
-

The Joy in Giving

January 14, 2023

“God loves...”

Whatever follows that should be highlighted, underlined, memorized, clung to, and repeated. John 3:16 says that God loves the world. Romans 5:8 says that God loves sinners. There are numerous verses that display God’s love for you (John 15:9; 1 John 4:19; Galatians 2:20; just to name a few!).

In the midst of all of these groups, God, in his Word to us, singles out this one group.

Read *2 Corinthians 9:6-15*

Yes, that’s right, God doesn’t just love the giver or the generous; God loves the one who gives cheerfully or with great joy! This fits right in line with the Gospel. The heart of Jesus that we see in Hebrews 12:2 where Jesus approaches the cross with joy goes hand in hand with your call to cheerfully give all to God.

Let’s start here, do you give? Do you give your time to the Lord? Do you give your abilities and skills to the Lord? Do you give your money to the Lord? Now, take that a step further, when you give financially(the passage above speaks directly to an expectation and practice of financial giving), do you give with joy?

It is not admirable or spiritual to say, “Since I do not give cheerfully, I will not give at all.” That would be a fool’s logic. Instead, you, along with all believers, should ask, “God, how can I grow in my joy *as* I give?”

Today, find a way to practice cheerful giving!

Before giving ever reaches your hand, it starts in your heart.

Read *Deuteronomy 15:7-11*.

Do not fall into the trap of believing that the above passage was only meant for a specific people at a specific time. Doing so would showcase the view you have of the Bible, seeing it primarily as a history book. While this is not completely wrong, don't let yourself stop there. See the Bible as a history book, an instruction manual, and a love letter. A history book reminds you of what has happened; an instruction manual tells you what to do; and a love letter gives you insight into the why and the heart of the author. Considering these three viewpoints you can begin to see the heart behind the above passages.

- “Do not harden your heart...” soften it towards the family of God.
- “Do not shut your hand...” open it joyfully.
- Do not let “there be an unworthy thought in your heart...” tune your heart to God’s righteousness.
- Do “not be grudging when you give...” rejoice in your ability to bless and provide.

Verse 11 challenges you that there will always be reasons to give; therefore, you need not wait for the situation to change. Instead, allow your heart to align with God’s who gives freely and joyfully.

- *What area do you need to shift in your giving?*
-
-

The Joy in Serving

January 16, 2023

Did you know, there is a reward for serving? It's not a reward based on merit or performance. The reward is given through faithful obedience, diligence, and endurance.

Read *Colossians 3:23-24*

What comes to mind when you hear the phrase 'work heartily'? Some translations of the Bible will use terms like 'willingly,' 'from the soul,' or 'enthusiastically.' The Greek term used is equivalent to that of our breath. To serve the Lord, to work heartily for the Lord is to put every breath to work. This is not burdensome tasks being watched over by an evil taskmaster.

There is a freeing redemption in knowing that every breath can count and matter. Each one matters in the present and will be rewarded in the eternal inheritance.

This sounds great, but there is one important question, *who are you serving?* If the answer is anything but the Lord, your joy will be drained and depleted. You will labor in such a way that you will be constantly searching for a joy that cannot be found.

In Christ Jesus and through the Holy Spirit you have been given joy. Therefore, you do not need to serve in search of joy, but out of joy.

- *What act of service instantly puts a smile on your face?
How can you step into that area more?*

The Joy in Serving

January 17, 2023

Is your life busy?

That may seem like a silly question to start with since most people seem to answer that with an enthusiastic “YES!” So, answer this question instead: Do you have too much good in your life?

Before you answer that question, read *Deuteronomy 28:45-48*

It is absolutely possible for an abundance of good to keep you from serving the Lord with joyfulness and gladness. When you accumulate so much in your life or life’s essentials become so immediately available, a dependency on God wains. Do you *really* need to keep going to church? Do you *really* need to pray? Fast? Serve?

Instead of letting your abundance hinder your joy of serving, what if you allowed it to further your joy of serving? What would it look like for you to move from basking in abundance to using your full schedule, packed fridge, overflowing closet, or robust bank account to further the Kingdom of God?

Don’t make excuses of not having enough. Start using what you have to serve the Lord and you will be awed by the goodness and provision of God.

- *How has God equipped you to use what you have to serve him and his purposes today?*

The Joy in Serving

January 18, 2023

Start today by reading *Luke 10:1-12; 17*.

Place yourself in the shoes of one of the seventy-two. After listening to Jesus explain the situation and what to expect in verses 1-12, would you have actually gone? It's quite possible as the seventy-two set out, they envisioned a hard and difficult experience. They may have seen themselves coming back to Jesus with their head low and walking to Jesus to get a comforting pat on the back as if to say, "Thanks for trying."

Praise God that was not their experience! In the midst of their obedience to the commissioning of Jesus, they found a great joy that is on full display in verse 17.

Serving is not a synonym for suffering. Is every place you find your hand reaching out and foot stepping out going to be pleasant, no. But every time you serve, as cliché as it sounds, is another opportunity to experience the joy in Christ.

- *When you think of serving, what other synonyms come to mind? Do you think of serving more in the negative or positive?*

- *Write below a time in which you experienced joy after obediently serving the cause of Christ.*

Where does growth start?

No, this isn't a trap. If you think about the physical realm, growth starts at existence. If we are talking about the spiritual realm, growth starts at the new life we have in Christ. Scripture repeatedly reminds you that you are not merely walking along some unfortunate path in this world. In fact, in your sin, you are dead. Dead things don't grow!

In order to find joy in growing you must first recognize the very thing that brings joy to the front door of God and his heavenly host.

Read *Luke 15:8-10*

First, are you alive? Are you rooted in the truth that Jesus is exactly who you need and is *all* you need in this life? If yes, praise God! If you are alive, how is your growth going? Has it stalled? Would you describe it as flourishing? Are you still, after so many years, a small sprout in God's Garden? Participating in this devotional series is a great first step in your growth journey.

If you find yourself questioning exactly where you are planted, then rejoice! For today you have the opportunity to bring joy to the throne of God. Repent and receive Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Spend time with God praising him for areas of growth in your life and searching for the withered leaves that need to be pruned.

The Joy in Growing

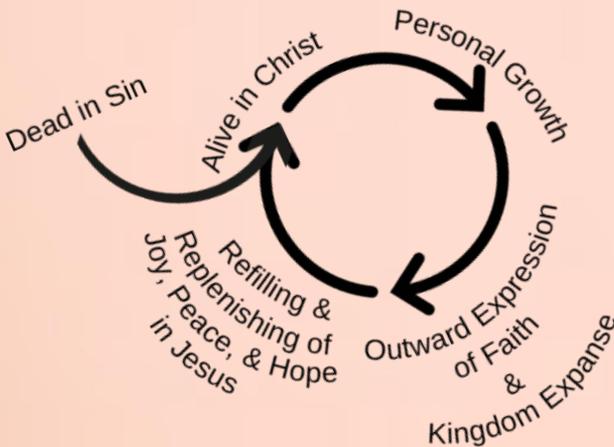
January 20, 2023

The conversation of growth within a church context centers around two areas: personal growth and expansive growth. Personal growth is often what is thought about when you hear things like *investing in yourself* or *spending alone time with God* (like you're doing now!). Expansive growth can be thought of within evangelistic efforts or outreach events.

Romans 15:8-13 proposes an interesting viewpoint on how these two are connected. Read these verses now.

God has always been working toward an expansive growth in regard to His Kingdom. Through Israel he was bringing the world to himself. Did this mean that Israel need not be concerned about their own personal growth? Of course not!

The joy and peace you have in believing will enable you to better experience the hope and joy in the expanse of God's Kingdom. It is a circular pattern we experience.



Where are you in this journey today? How long have you been there and how can you take your next step in joy?

The Joy in Growing

January 21, 2023

It took 21 days to get here, but this may be one of the most critical passages when discussing joy. In the verses below you will see the joy God calls you to is not your own, it's his. Not only that, but you will also see the difference between being alive in the Spirit and keeping in step with the Spirit.

Read *Galatians 5:22-25*

You are well served to remember that your faith and relationship with the Lord is a journey, not an event. At times you might become frustrated with the lack of expression of the Fruit of the Spirit in your life. Check the health of the soil, but also remember that fruit is not instantly ripe. There is mature fruit and immature fruit. As you grow in your walk with God, the immature fruit will ripen. The non-productive branches will be cut off to make room for more fruit to be produced.

But take this warning: If there exists no fruit, you may very well be planted in the wrong vineyard. Growth and fruit production, including joy, are natural products of being rooted in Jesus Christ and keeping in step with the Holy Spirit.

Where are you planted? Where are you getting your nourishment regularly? From the Word of God, your job, your family, your accomplishments, or your need for attention from those around you?

Through the Holy Spirit you *WILL* experience God's joy.

The Joy in Multiplying

January 22, 2023

These 31 days are not meant to simply make you feel better. There is more at stake than just the brief few minutes you spend reading this. The goal is to transform the “after.” After you finish reading this study, after you pray, after you read your Bible, then what? Your going out ought to change the world!

Read *Isaiah 55:12-13*

You are a part of a “go out” people. At one time Jesus invited you to “come and see.” Now that you have known him and have a relationship with him (if you do), you are called to go out in joy. This is not a call to go out on vacation; it’s a call to go out on mission, to increase the number who are coming to see and then going out in joy. When you live this lifestyle, watch out! You will see God move mightily in you and through you.

Instead of brokenness, you will see redemption. Instead of depression, you will see hope. The purpose? Look to verse 13; to make the name of the Lord great and well-known!

Oh what joy there is in seeing ones you invest in take up the Banner of God in this world.

- *Who are you investing in outside of your family?*

Continue reading *Isaiah 56:1-8* for more of God’s heart to reach all people.

“...for he nearly died for the work of Christ...”

Life in Christ is full of peace and joy. However, that does not mean you will experience life pain-free. As you, like Epaphroditus in the passage below, go out and serve, minister, and give, there will be challenges. Don't run from this truth and try to pretend everything is always good. You live in a fallen and broken world. You deal with sickness, hurt, pain, and death. Yet without these challenges, would you truly be able to know and experience the joy of multiplying disciples?

Read *Philippians 2:25-30*

The challenges that came with Epaphroditus fulfilling his call to ministry created joy in more than his own life. The church at Philippi was able to rejoice at a life well spent. A life lived on mission, focused on the Kingdom of God.

Today, take a moment to rejoice with the brothers and sisters in Christ who are doing the work of the Lord in hard places. Don't mourn their hard assignments on their behalf, rejoice in the faithfulness God is working in their lives.

- *What difficulty in discipleship and raising up new believers do you need joy to flow into today?*

The Joy in Suffering

January 25, 2023

Read *James 1:2-4*

Below, write down your challenging situations, difficult circumstances, and trials of various kinds.

I count _____ as joy.

This is not some *name-it-claim-it* exercise. This is meant to help you remembering that the suffering of this life has eternal value. Something great is being produced in you! Faith. Steadfastness. Completion. It is through the fire precious metals are refined. Are you not more precious than gems to God?

As trials arise in your life (for it is certain they will) work on saying, "I count _____ as joy because it is producing something in me that is eternally valuable."

The Joy in Suffering

January 26, 2023

This is temporary. Yes, this devotional, but also what is experienced in this world.

It was said that one of Abraham Lincoln's favorite phrases, and one you've likely heard, was *This Too Shall Pass*.

If that phrase is true, what joy can be had, for even joy is fleeting, right? In terms of this world, yes. But there is a greater Kingdom, an eternal place that will not deteriorate, become stained, or broken. There is a Kingdom waiting where there will be no more pain, no more tears, and no more hurt. Doesn't that sound nice!?

Here's the better news, this place not only exists, but you can live there forever! God never diminishes the suffering of this world; he points to something better.

Read *Psalm 30:4-5*

The exchange of weeping for joy may happen on the practical level quite often in your life. The full and true joy mentioned is not seen when you are sad on Monday but wake up Tuesday feeling better. The true joy comes in the eternal morning when you rise with Jesus, if you know him.

- *As an additional passage, read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18 and jot down any notes below.*

The Joy in Suffering

January 27, 2023

You need a heart transplant. You need a heart exchange. You don't need more money, a better job, or better healthcare. You need the central organ for your entire body to be transformed.

How often have you prayed for your own heart to change toward a difficult boss or an unruly child, or even a broken relationship where you've been hurt?

If you're honest, you've likely prayed for God to change the environment around you rather than to change you.

Here is a sobering reminder: if God were to answer all of mankind's prayers for changed circumstances, joy would still be lacking. The problem is not first outward, but inward.

What ails you today? What is your struggle, trial, or hardship that weighs heavy on you? Write it below:

Now Read *Proverbs 17:22*

Take the rest of your time today to ask God for a heart full of joy. No matter your suffering diagnosis, "a joyful heart is good medicine."

The Joy in Suffering

January 28, 2023

Rube Goldberg, an American cartoonist, inventor, and innovator is the creator of the famous Rube Goldberg machine. This machine, in its simplest form, uses a chain reaction to carry out a simple task. The purpose of these machines is purely for entertainment and joy.

In your life, suffering has the potential to start a chain reaction that will ultimately produce a lasting hope. Read about this chain reaction in *Romans 5:1-5*.

This chain reaction does not start with the suffering, but how you handle the suffering. With joy? Then expect an end result of a hope that cannot be shaken. Anything else will leave you stuck in suffering. To be clear, this is no artificial joy or just putting on a smile. This comes from knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord. When you know him this way, you can be sure that God wastes nothing...including your suffering!

Therefore, if you suffer, for the sake of Christ, rejoice! You are walking in the footsteps of Jesus. If you are suffering from living a life separated from God, run to him so that you can rejoice in salvation!

Read *Acts 5:40-42* for some extra encouragement today.

The Joy in Resting

January 29, 2023

1 John 1

The work is done
Completed
Finished

The Word of Life has come
God's Son
Jesus

The bridge resurrected
Redeemed
Restored

The Good News known
In Me
To the World

His path is Light
No darkness
Pure Fellowship

His rest is Joy
True Joy
My Joy

The Joy in Resting

January 30, 2023

You have likely heard the phrase *everybody's working for the weekend*. Perhaps you can relate to this sentiment. You work hard, earn money, and save to one day be able to rest from your work and enjoy life. Until then, the weekends will have to do.

Is this all life is boiled down to? Work hard and in the end perhaps you will finally find rest and joy?

Read *Psalm 4:6-8*

No materialistic gain can outproduce joy in your life compared to what God can do. The joy offered in him is greater than receiving all the luxuries this world has to offer. That is because God's joy enables you to rest.

There is no fear of a stock market crash, a robbery, or an identity theft. The joy that God puts in your heart allows you the true freedom to rest in lasting peace. This is not something that takes place after you finish working, but even in the midst of work this joy is present.

Today, do your best to find time and rest in the joy God puts in your heart. Maybe that means sitting still in the quiet, maybe it means laughing with your family, maybe it means letting your attitude be changed at work. Whatever it is, rest in him today. See the joy God gives.

When Joy is Lacking

January 31, 2023

This past month you have thought through and encountered joy within a variety of contexts. Each of these were to serve as a unifying effort to center your life on the joy of the Lord. At no point was this to ignore the fact that you will experience moments where there is a joy-void in your life. The opposite is true!

With eyes that have seen Jesus as Savior and Lord, you also clearly see the brokenness of this world. Each time you do, joy can seemingly slip further and further from your grip. So what can be done?

When joy is not felt, it must be called upon.

To end this short journey through joy, read the two passages at the bottom of this page. May you call upon the joy of the Lord daily, especially when it does not manifest itself as freely as you would like. And may this joy bind you together with fellow believers around you. Oh that joy would be the neon sign of churches everywhere!

Read *1 Peter 1:3-9 & John 16:16-24* (Don't skip this reading!!!).

Your Next Step

31 days, way to go! Hopefully you have grown in your walk with God and have kept the Joy of the Lord in view this month. But now what? At Maranatha we have 3 “Next Steps” depending on where you are on your spiritual journey. No matter where you are, you always have a next step!

Step 1-Go through Starting Point

If you are new to Jesus or new to Maranatha, this is a great place to start! Not only will you learn more about the Good News of Jesus, but you will also see how Maranatha has been specifically tasked to carry out the Great Commission in our community.

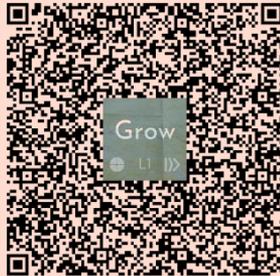
Scan the QR Code to begin *Starting Point!*



Step 2-Go through Grow-L1

This online, self-paced course is perfect if you want to push further into your faith and discover how God has uniquely gifted you. It will go through things like Spiritual Disciplines, Spiritual Formation, Bible Reading and Interpretation, godly relationships, and more.

Scan the QR Code to begin *Grow-L1!*



Step 3-Join a Discipleship Group

If your next step includes more of a personal touch by being guided through the practical application of a life lived for Jesus in a small group setting, this is the step for you. You will be encouraged and challenged in your faith as well as equipped to be a leader. If this is your next step, email us (contact@maranatha.nyc) and we would love to connect you to a group!

INVITING our
diverse community
to **GROW** in
relationship with
JESUS and
ONE ANOTHER.



maranatha
BAPTIST CHURCH
for all nations

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