

“Joy in the Mourning”

John 16: 16-22

6/19/22

Discussion Guide

Play a song about joy before you begin as a way to move you from the activity of the day to this time studying and discussing God’s Word with your home group.

Pray and Read the Passage:

“In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.”

17 At this, some of his disciples said to one another, “What does he mean by saying, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,’ and ‘Because I am going to the Father?’” 18 They kept asking, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We don’t understand what he is saying.”

19 Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, “Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me’? 20 Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. 21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. 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.” John 16:16-22

1. What do you think of people being depicted as little bombs? Is that a realistic portrait or a bit too pessimistic for you? What tends to get your goat? What has God done in your life to bring stability to your inner being?
2. These are very stressful times. What are you doing to keep the stress from jostling you and causing you to “lose it”?
3. Define joy. How is Christian joy different from worldly joy?
4. Jesus said three times in the passage above that if we listen to Him and take His Word to heart that joy would bubble up within us, a joy we can’t lose. Is joy inevitable in the Christian’s life? Has that been true in your life?
5. What do you think about the habit Christians have of smiling when they see each other? When you watch worship services on TV everyone is excited and smiling. It very triumphant. You do not see sorrow and pain mixed in with the worship. Yet, Paul describes the Christian as *“sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.”* I Corinthians 6:10 Comment on the above observation. Then answer this question: What role does sorrow play in worship and the Christian life?

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6. Does the world view God as a joyful God? If not, how do they view God? Have you ever seen a picture of Jesus laughing hysterically? How does it hit you? What's your favorite portrait or word picture of God?
7. The Bible describes the early believers this way: *“They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity.”* Acts 2:46 Is that an accurate picture of the church today? Is this how the world would describe most Christians today?
8. Read this text: *“A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.”* (vs. 21) What does this analogy teach us about joy?
9. What strategies do people use to cope with stress or dark times? Do they work? How does Christian joy help people cope with stress and dark times? Does it work?
10. React to this statement: “Christians are far more pessimistic about people than the world is.”
11. What is the Gospel and how does it produce joy?
12. Share time when a joyful Christian lifted you up.
13. What is Christian joy grounded in?
14. What's your favorite Christian song about joy? Do worship songs tend to be overly optimistic, pessimistic or are they pretty realistic? See if you can find a Christian song that mixes joy and sorrow together. Play it.
15. In verse 22 Jesus says that *“no one takes it (joy) from us.”* Debate that statement. Can we be robbed of our joy? If so, how?
16. How has “the joy of the Lord” been your strength? Nehemiah 8:10
17. Final comments or questions on things not brought up during the discussion?

End with another song with joy as its theme.