



BACKGROUND PASSAGE(S): John 15:1-26, 16:22; Job 8:19; Psalm 16:9-11; 43:4, 89:15; Isaiah 61:10; Matthew 2:10; Luke 2:10; Romans 5:2, 15:13; Acts 13:52; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2:20; Galatians 5:22; Philippians 1:25, 4:4; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 1:8

KEY VERSE(s): – John 15:11 – “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.”

Define and describe biblical joy and compare/contrast with happiness, gratitude, and thankfulness. Why are experiences or circumstances contingent/not contingent on experiencing biblical joy? Who can experience biblical joy?

What / Who is the source of biblical joy? Why? How?

How does one experience biblical joy? What is the relationship between obedience and biblical joy?

In what way(s) does biblical joy relate to biblical hope and biblical peace?

Although “joy” can appear elevated during this time of year, many people in this season are somber, sorrowful, fearful, anxious, etc. Think about a person in your sphere of influence (work, neighbor, family, etc.) that may fit this description. Discuss together what you want this person to hear. How would you articulate the gospel and the promise of biblical hope, biblical peace, and biblical joy?

Discuss how does living a life of biblical joy ultimately brings glory to God. Be sure to include the experiences of hardships and trials in your discussion.

What is your “take-away” from this week’s study and how can it be applied to your daily walk with Christ?

Perhaps the most common error people make when studying the Bible is to read meaning into the verses as opposed to discovering meaning from proper context. Here is a basic method to use when studying a verse or passage that will help you avoid this. Always begin each time of Bible study with prayer, asking God to help you understand what you are reading correctly.

1) Observation

What does the passage say?

Read the passage then look back to see what the passage is saying. Look for repeated words, key phrases, and cross-references. Think about questions that you have after reading. Allow your curiosity to lead you further in understanding.

Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? What else do you notice?

What other questions arise from the passage?

2) Interpretation

What does the passage mean?

After observing what was said in the text, interpretation seeks to understand what God, through the book's author, is seeking to communicate through this text. Context is crucial to determining the meaning. Outside resources like Bible dictionaries and commentaries can help at this point.

What is the context? Why is the author bringing this up?

What is God saying through this passage?

What is the main point of this passage?

3) Application

How do I need to respond?

It's easy to read through passages, especially those familiar to us, without taking time to stop and think about how we can practically apply the truths we studied.

How should I live my life in light of this passage?

How does this truth compel me to be transformed?

What does it look like to put this into practice?

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does."

-James 1:22-25 (NKJV)