



There is joy in my trial

Small Group Work Sheet
March 13, 2011

Part 1 - Ice Breaker

- What trials hurt the most watching others walk through?
- What are some of the trials you faced in life?

Part 2 - Sermon Review

- Did you realize Jesus had at least 7 brothers and sisters? Why do you think it was so hard for James to accept Jesus as the Messiah before the resurrection?
- “The term servant of Jesus Christ” sounds derogatory. How did your opinion of that title change? How will you incorporate what you learned about that title into your everyday life when you introduce yourself to others?
- We shouldn’t count all suffering in our life as joy. Pastor Kurt shared that *consequences* and *discipline* are two other sources of suffering in our life. How should we respond to them? Are there times when God mixes consequences, discipline and trials together? What would that look like in marital breakdown? In a job loss? In failing health?
- How important is right thinking when we face trials? Why is right thinking about our trials essential to get through them?
- Explain in your own words and use examples of the maturity process James describes.

Trials ➡ Testing ➡ Steadfastness ➡ Completeness + Maturity

- God’s goal is our spiritual maturity, not our comfort. How does understanding God’s goal for our life change the way you look at the trials God allows you to face? How does the knowledge that trials are God’s chosen method to bring us to spiritual maturity change your outlook on life?
- How does the example of Jesus in Hebrews 12:2 help you as you go through a trial?
- Did this message change the way you look at a problem you are facing right now?

Part 3 - Digging Deeper... *Getting through the trial*

So you are going through a hard trial and you are still having trouble finding joy to get through it. What should we do? Let me give you an idea to keep your focus.

Get four 3 x 5 cards and write the following on them.

- On the first card, write: **WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?**
Write down the details of your trial.
- On the second card, write: **WHY AM I HERE ON EARTH?** What's the purpose of my life according to God's Word?
- On the third card, write: **HOW CAN THIS TRIAL ADVANCE THAT PURPOSE?** What can I do today to advance the purpose of displaying the superiority of a life lived in God?
- On the fourth card, write: **WHAT RESOURCES CAN I ACCESS THIS MOMENT TO HELP ME?** If you're a follower of Christ, you are one of God's children and have the strength and the comfort of the Holy Spirit within. You have the Word of God giving wisdom to direct your path.



The fourth card is key. Your resources extend beyond the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. You have supportive Christian friends. You have the grace of God, which allows you to begin again after you have failed. Ask yourself, "How can I draw down upon those resources to make God-honoring choices and find my way through this trial?"

Keep going over these cards so God's purpose in your life will not be lost. This practical exercise will help you "Count it all joy".