

Count It All Joy

James 1:1-17, 2 Corinthians 8:1-2, 1 Corinthians 13

We will all face trials in life. In an unbelieving world, it's hard to see anything productive that comes from trials. Where the world sees trials as devastation and destruction that results in nothing, God sees opportunity to produce joy and strength in our lives so we can stand in his promise. When we put our faith in God, we can consider it joy when we face trials because we trust he will work all things together for our good.

Joy is different than happiness. Joy is a spiritual quality, while happiness is an emotional response often tied to circumstances. Happiness is often dependent on what is happening to us, while joy is something that happens in us. The joy found in Jesus is something that can stay with us in difficulty, challenge, and trial. When we believe in Jesus, we find joy in all things because we trust his heart and will is to fulfil his promises to bless us, approve us and crown our life with his purpose.

Tests and trials reveal the content of our hearts. There are trials that come from our enemy and tests that God allows because of what he has promised us – God can use both to mature us. God is for us and wants us to pass tests and trials with his strength. When we trust God in challenge he produces patient endurance within us, and his Spirit is fresh and active in our life.

God wants to bring us to a different level of strength. God is with us through all things and is working within us to make us mature, complete and lacking nothing. God wants us to walk in life, full of his wisdom, healthy and strong in his Spirit, inferior to nothing. Let us live our lives trusting God, believing that he is always at work, knowing that the testing of our faith produces endurance, so we are complete and able to stand with him in all things.

Church Highlights

- Hillsong Conference, register online: hillsong.com/conference
- SIX LOUD WEEKENDS! What a great opportunity to bring friends & family to church in the lead up to Hillsong Conference!

Pray Together

- Salvations, that people come to know Jesus
- Pastor Brian and Bobbie Houston
- Colour Conference

Nation Builders

We can make a difference as a connect group by praying for the Nation Builders causes we support and by giving together. Our offering extends the reach of our church locally to reach and influence the world for Jesus.

Count It All Joy

Connection and Action

Questions to promote conversation and connection

Joy

Q Who are the most joyful people you know? Describe them to us.

Q Do you think they have trials and tests in life? How do you think they became so joyful?

Q Would you describe yourself as a joyful person? Explain your reasons.

Q What's the difference between joy and happiness?

Tests and Trials

Q How can we derive learning and growth from failure?

Q What tests have you been through in your Christian walk?

Q What did you learn and how did you grow in the process?

Maturity

Q What does Christian maturity look like?

Q Why do you think it's important?

Q How do we achieve it?

Bible and Belief

Questions to help believers develop a biblical world view

Read James 1:13-15

Q What gets tested in a trial? How does a trial do this?

Q What happens when we pass the test?

Q Describe James' process of temptation and sin.

Q Is "temptation" sin? Why?

Q Should we feel guilty for experiencing temptation? Why?

Q How can we overcome temptation so it doesn't lead to sin?

Q How can we reduce temptation?

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

Q How did the Macedonians behave? What was extraordinary about it?

Q How did they achieve joy and generosity in the midst of poverty and trial?

Q In your trial, what effect could grace have upon you?

Q How do we access this grace?

Growing Leadership

Questions to help people grow as leaders

Growing Yourself

Q You've made mistakes as a leader. How have you learned from those? Give an example.

Q What skills do you need to be able to learn from failure?

Q Joy and charisma are essential qualities of a leader. Why, what are they and how can we develop them?

Helping People

Q How do you help and encourage people going through a trial?

Q What counsel would you give someone seeking help to overcome temptation?

Q Resilience (i.e. the ability to "bounce back") is an essential life skill. How can we help people develop it?

Building the Group

Q A successful group goes through difficult times together. What's required of the leader during these times?

Pastoral Care

- We have a pastoral care team at church to walk alongside people through life's challenges
- With their permission, should anyone in your connect group have experience sickness, death of a loved one, marriage challenges, or surgeries, please contact our church office:
Sydney 02 8853 5353, Melbourne 03 9720 2099, Brisbane 07 3422 8500, Newcastle 02 4927 1888