

Day 03 – *January 15*

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May They Have My Joy

Key Verse: John 17:13-14

John 17: 13-14 “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. 14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. (John 17:13-14, NIV)

As part of the very last dialogue between Jesus and his Father, Jesus asks for his disciples to experience the joy he had. In reading this I could not help but ask what joy is he talking about here? And from where can anyone experience this joy. As I was reflecting on the words of Jesus, coupled with these questions it dawned on me the joy we experience during our difficult experiences here on earth is not of our own doing. It is one in which we participate.

As I read John 17, it's clear to see that His followers then and today are bound to face challenges because of our profession of faith in him. If the masses did not understand him why would or should we expect otherwise? I found this very encouraging. As I live my life in accordance to his words (the way prescribed by him), he protects me. He, Jesus is very much aware of the troubles his followers will face. John 17, I see the realization that the battle is not for me to win.

There is a joy in knowing. And for us as Christians, we know how 'the story ends.' Jesus encourages us despite our challenges, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33b). Similarly, the author of Hebrews encourages us. Since we are being cheered on by those who have gone before us “let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance

the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2, NIV). The end speaks more and should shape us, as remain faithful to him. Our experience, although difficult and very disabling at times is not much when it faces the supremacy of Jesus. And so, he asks his father, to give us a similar joy. The joy that keeps us enduring to the end where we become overcomers.

As overcomers, we point to him, because it is he who has given us the victory. We have joy in our struggles and difficulties because we are aligned with the victor. Asking for joy or walking in joy during challenging times does not mean I am blind to the pain I will experience. In the story told by John (John 16-18), we find Jesus describing the difficulties the disciples will face. I am struck by Jesus' words asking his father to preserve them (John 17:16). Having joy in and as him mean we continue to look to him to fulfill our need.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

How would you define joy?

What brings you the most joy in the world and why? How do you navigate joy amid trouble?

PRAYER:

Dear Lord, please help us as we look to you for our joy. Please God, let us experience joy among our trials. Help us to look to you for joy. In our troubles, oh Lord help us know the joy you have placed in us. You are our champion, let us live like champions. In Jesus name we pray, amen.