

## WAYS TO FOSTER REJOICING

Foundational for continual rejoicing is to put our trust in God's character and sovereignty. We need to focus on the fact that:

God is fully in control, His promises are unchanging, Christ has won eternal victory, and the Holy Spirit is empowering us with his presence. Through suffering, believers are drawn closer to Christ, refined in their faith, and anchored in the hope of eternal glory.

***Corinthians 4:17-18*** reminds believers that earthly troubles are momentary compared to eternal glory; and, ***Hebrews 5:8*** informs us that it is through suffering that believers participate in the life of Christ and learn obedience and humility, as He did. Therefore, as we come to realize the benefits of suffering, we can put into practice ways to foster joy:

1. Focus on God's Attributes: Reflect on His lovingkindness, mercy, and power daily. This intentional focus nurtures gratitude. (***Isaiah 26:3***)
2. Meditate on Scripture: Passages like the Psalms, which recount God's faithfulness, fuel a joyful heart. (***Psalms 119:15 & 148***)
3. Engage in Prayer and Worship-the sacrifice of praise: Consistent communication with God helps shift attention from worries to His presence and promises. (***Ephesians 5: 19-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18***)
4. Serve Others: Serving those in need fosters joy and moves attention away from ourselves. (***Matthew 23:11; Acts 20:35***)
5. Remember Christ's Resurrection: The empty tomb is the ultimate source of hope, proving that even death cannot thwart God's plan. (***Colossians 3:2***)
6. Do not forsake assembling with other believers despite desires to withdraw; always maintain communication and counsel with wise fellow believers. (***Hebrews 10:25; Proverbs 1:5 & 19-20; James 1:5***)

Rejoicing is not an emotional high that ignores hardship but rather a choice grounded in divine promises, reinforced by Scripture, and nurtured through prayer, worship, and service. This lifestyle of ceaseless rejoicing displays confidence in the One who orchestrates all things for good (***Romans 8:28***) and reminds believers of the imperishable hope found in eternal life (***Titus 1:2***).

## BIBLICAL INSIGHTS ABOUT SUFFERING

*The Bible offers various insights into the origins and purposes of suffering that help form a framework for understanding and enduring it:*

\* **The fall and original sin:** *Genesis 3:16-19* establishes the theological foundation that suffering is a result of humanity's rebellion against God.

\* **The role of Satan:** *Job 1:12* illustrates that while Satan may be an agent of suffering, he operates within the boundaries set by God.

\* **Divine sovereignty and purpose:** *Romans 8:28* makes clear that although suffering is painful, it is not without purpose to bring about a greater good.

\* **Discipline and correction:** *Hebrews 12:6* teaches that suffering can be used as a measure of correction so that believers are guided back to righteousness and a deeper relationship with Jesus.

\* **The mystery of suffering:** The book of *Job* demonstrates that human understanding is limited and some aspects of suffering remain beyond human comprehension.

\* **The suffering of Christ:** *Isaiah 53:3-5* prophesies the sorrow and suffering of Jesus. We find in the NT that His suffering provided salvation for humanity, offering humanity a model for enduring suffering with hope and purpose.

\* **Eternal Perspective:** *2 Corinthians 4:17* shifts the focus from our present pain to future glory: *“For our light and momentary affliction is producing for us an eternal glory that is far beyond comparison.”*

# Scriptures Referenced in Workshop:

## “Set Apart in Suffering”

### FOCAL PASSAGE:

**ROMANS 5: 3-5:**

*“Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings,  
knowing that suffering produces endurance,  
and endurance produces character,  
and character produces hope’  
and hope does not put us to shame,  
because God’s love has been poured into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”*

**2 Timothy 3:12**

**John 16:33**

**2 Timothy 1:12**

**Romans 8:28**

**Acts 14:22**

**Hebrews 12:11**

**Psalms 26:2**

**Jeremiah 29:11**

**2 Corinthians 1:4**

**Matthew 26:35**

**John 21:17**

**Romans 15:13**

**Romans 5:2**

**Revelation 21:4**

**Acts 28:3-6**

**John 14:1**

# Attributes of God

(Abridged)

- Holy
- Immutable- unchanging
- Self-sufficient- has no needs
- Omnipotent- unlimited in power
- Omniscient- knows everything
- Omnipresent- always everywhere
- Wise & just
- Faithful
- Loving & gracious

## BIBLE CHARACTERS WHO PROFITED IN SUFFERING

SOLOMON: *Ecclesiastes 12:13, "The conclusion when all has been heard is:  
Reverence God and keep His commandments."*

HABAKKUK: *Habakkuk 3:17-19*

*Though the fig tree should not blossom,  
nor fruit be on the vines,  
the produce of the olive fail  
and the fields yield no food,  
the flock be cut off from the fold  
and there be no herd in the stalls,*

*<sup>18</sup>yet I will rejoice in the LORD;  
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.*

*<sup>19</sup>GOD, the Lord, is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the deer's;  
he makes me tread on my high places.*

JOB: *Job 42:3- "...I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful  
for me, which I did not know."*

PAUL: *2 Corinthians 12:9- "I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that  
the power of Christ may rest upon me." &*

*Philippians 3:10- "...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may  
share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death..."*

PETER: *1 Peter 5:6&7 -"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so  
at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties  
on Him, because He cares for you." & John 21:17,"Lord, you know all things."*

JACOB: *Genesis 32:10- "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the  
truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant..."*

JESUS: *(Hebrews 5:8)- "Although he was the Son, he learned obedience from what he  
suffered."*