

I. Topics for Tough Times #4 – Joy – Delighting in God by Faith

A. Definition of Joy

Definition: The Spirit empowered delight which comes from recognizing the infinite value of Christ and, by faith, finding our total satisfaction and fulfillment in deepening our relationship with Him and with His people, as we are conformed to His image

- 1. Spirit empowered*
- 2. Delight*
- 3. Comes from recognizing the infinite value of Christ*
- 4. By faith*
- 5. Finding our total satisfaction and fulfillment*
- 6. In deepening our relationship with Him*
- 7. And with his people*
- 8. As we are conformed to His image*

B. The Pursuit of Joy

- 1. Overcoming barriers*
 - a) Ignorance**
 - b) Disobedience**
 - c) Pride/Selfishness**
 - d) Lack of thankfulness/contentedness**
 - e) Lack of fellowship/service**
- 2. Pursuing promoters of joy*
 - a) Holiness**
 - b) Humility**
 - c) Knowledge of God**
 - (1) The Word*
 - (2) Prayer*
 - d) Eternal perspective**
 - e) Diligent service**
 - f) Regular fellowship**
 - (1) Relationship with other believers*
 - (2) Singing with other believers*

C. The Exercise of Joy

- 1. When to rejoice – Always*
- 2. In what to rejoice – everything*
- 3. How to rejoice*
 - a) In prosperity**
 - (1) Consider*
 - (a) Consider it as coming from Him**
 - (b) Consider how this can help you appreciate Him more**

- (c) Consider how this can be used for His glory
- (d) Consider how this helps you look more like Jesus

- (2) *Guard against pride*
- (3) *Thank the Lord*
- (4) *Seek the Lord for ways to glorify Him*
- (5) *Step forward in active service*

b) In trials

- (1) *Consider the truth*
 - (a) Consider it as coming from Him
 - (b) Consider it as necessary for your growth
 - (c) Consider it as demonstrating the reality of your faith
 - (d) Consider it as helping you remain firm to the end
 - (e) Consider it as conforming you to the image of Christ
- (2) *Captivate your thoughts*
 - (a) Carefully take your thoughts captive to the truth of Christ
 - (i) Confessing sinful thoughts
 - (ii) Replacing them with biblical thoughts
- (3) *Direct your will by faith*
 - (a) **By faith direct your will and thinking to the Lord by believing His person and work**
 - (i) Consider the salvation He has provided
 - (ii) Consider the inheritance that is yours
 - (iii) Consider the power he provides
 - (b) **By faith, direct your will and affections towards Christ by choosing to delight in the truth of deeper relationship with Christ and conformity to His image**
- (4) *Actively praise*
- (5) *Actively pray*
- (6) *Actively obey*
- (7) *Actively evaluate*

D. The Reward of Joy