

WEEK 3

Seeing Jesus through the Uncertainty

AN INTERACTIVE FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

JESUS, OUR GREATEST JOY

John 16:19–20, 22

Main Idea

JESUS GIVES US JOY EVEN WHEN THINGS ARE HARD.

Memory Verse

“Count it all joy, my brothers,
when you meet trials of various kinds,
for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.”

JAMES 1:2–3, ESV

LEADER: Last week we talked about how God is always with us, even when we feel like we’re in the wilderness. Today, we’re going to talk about our greatest joy. Tell me about a time you felt very joyful.

Answers: Go around the family and have everyone give an answer. Here are some examples to get you started:

- When I won that award in school.
- When my sibling was born.
- When I got to spend the summer with my grandparents.
- Our last family vacation.
- When they did well at a sporting event.

LEADER: These joyful moments in your life make up your story. Like we talked about last week, there are very hard days in our stories when we feel like we are walking through a wilderness or desert, but there are also joyful days, even during the wilderness days. Joy is a gift rooted in God the Father.

Think about your favorite story. What are some “wilderness moments” in the story and what were some “joyful moments” in the story?

Give each person a chance to share what their story is and some hard and joyful moments throughout the story.

LEADER: In the verses we are about to read, Jesus was nearing the end of His own story on earth— He is about to die on the cross— and He is having a conversation with his disciples about how they will feel in the days ahead.

Read John 16:19–20, 22 together aloud.

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LEADER: Jesus tells His disciples—His friends—that they will be sad when He leaves. He tells them it will be very hard, but their sadness will turn to joy, with time. He doesn't deny hard times will happen, but He assures them and us that there will be joy. What you've been through, what you're going through or what you will go through is not the end of your story. Joy and sadness both have a purpose. They're making us more like Jesus.

Read James 1:2–3 together aloud.

LEADER: It's in the “wilderness moments” of life where we learn and grow a lot. Good things grow in hard places. Flowers must push through the hard soil they're planted in order to bloom. Our “wilderness moments” teach us to keep going and trusting God.

What good things—or even joyful things— have come from hard moments in your life? How have you seen these things produce endurance in your faith?

Answer: We can see in hard times that God doesn't leave us. He walks with us in these hard seasons, and there is joy in Him. The hard moments teach us to keep trusting God. The wilderness and the mountaintop are making us more like Jesus.

LEADER: God works in our situations to make us more like Jesus. He is also preparing us to be used by Him for His glory. Philippians 1:6 says “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” Even though we cannot always see it, there is purpose in our wilderness. Consider it pure joy knowing that Jesus is not finished with you yet.

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ACTIVITIES

Try doing one of these activities a day as a family to help you remember the lesson. Each day, repeat the memory verse and the main idea.

DAY 1: Complete the devotional lesson as a family.

DAY 2: Write your memory verse using chalk! Post a picture, and tag us with the hashtag: #NAMBFamDevo

DAY 3: Create a Joy Jar! Place an empty jar somewhere in the house, with scraps of paper and a pen nearby. Throughout this week, have members of your family write down or draw something that brought them joy and place it in the jar. At the end of the week, take turns pulling out the scraps of paper and celebrate all the ways your family found joy this week!

DAY 4: Send notes to someone else to bring them joy! Use our printable provided.

DAY 5: Call, FaceTime or Text someone you love and ask them what brings them joy during this time. Share things that bring you joy (using ideas from your jar) and ask for a way you can pray for them this week.

DAY 6: As a family, write a short song—or a jingle—about what you're thankful for in the midst of this hard season.

DAY 7: Color the provided picture of this story. Either have each member of your family color their own, or color it together as a family.

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MEMORY VERSE INSTRUCTIONS

The memory verse activity is included on the following page.

1. Fold the paper along the dotted lines so the scripture memory sheet is folded into fifths.
2. Fold the paper so only the top verse (presentation one) is showing.
3. Read the verse out loud five times.
4. Turn the first fold backwards so it's no longer visible and only presentation two is visible.
5. Keep presentation one hidden and fill in the blanks of presentation two.
6. Fold the page again to presentation three. Fill in the blanks of presentation three.
7. Fold the page again to presentation four. Fill in the blanks of presentation four.
8. Turn to presentation five. Just looking at the first letter of each word, attempt to say the entire verse on presentation five. Practice saying the verse aloud again.

JAMES 1:2-3, ESV

“Count it all joy, my brothers,
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for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.”

JAMES 1:2-3, ESV

“Count it all joy, my b_____,
when you meet t_____ of various kinds,
for you know that the testing of your f_____ produces steadfastness.”

JAMES 1:2-3, ESV

“C_____ it all joy, my b_____,
when you meet t_____ of various kinds,
for you k_____ that the testing of your f_____ produces steadfastness.”

JAMES 1:2-3, ESV

“C_____ it all j_____, my b_____,
when you meet t_____ of various k_____,
for you k_____ that the t_____ of your f_____ produces s_____.”

JAMES 1:2-3, ESV

“C i a j, m b,
w y m t o v k,
f y k t t t o y f p s.”

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