

Long Story Short: Joy for the Journey

Reflect

1. Why is experiencing joy important for daily living?
2. What is the difference between happiness and joy?
3. In your opinion, what are important factors to experiencing joy in life?
4. How have you experienced joy?

Read Your Bible

- Exodus 33:18-23
- Mark 9:2-8

Apply God's Word to Your Life

1. Read Exodus 33:18-23. The Israelites have been traveling in the desert after fleeing Egypt for some time and there have been some mis-steps and frustration along the way. They are wary of traveling to a new land and Moses doesn't want to go without some specific help from God. What feelings do you imagine Moses experienced when God passed by him on the rock?
2. How would God's presence before Moses help him and the Israelites for the journey ahead?
3. Read Mark 9:2-8. When Jesus was transfigured before the disciples at first, they were afraid, and in his fear, Peter offered to set up tent dwellings for Jesus, Moses and Elijah. Then God spoke to them about Jesus. What other emotions do you imagine the disciples experienced after hearing the voice of God?
4. In both the Exodus and Mark texts, God gives a glimpse of who He is and what awaits us when we get to live with Him forever in heaven. How can these glimpses of who God is and what awaits us give us hope?
5. What are some ways you or other people you know have glimpsed God at work in their lives and in the world?
6. If God made His presence known to you in a special way today, what emotions do you imagine you would experience? How could that help you in your life today?
7. What area in your life do you feel weary or tired and need to glimpse God at work?

Conclusion/Thesis

Life is full of ups and downs and the journey can feel long. How amazing it is to know that we are not alone in our journey, to know that God is with us! God gives us glimpses of who He is, what He's about and what awaits us in heaven. He does this through His Word, other people and daily experiences of grace and blessing. He does this most powerfully and profoundly in His Son, Jesus, who lived and died for the sake of the world's sin and was raised from the dead so that we may have the promise of eternal life. Placing our hope and faith in Jesus allows us to experience joy, hope and inspiration to sustain us for our life's journey with Him. Jesus showed us the true measure of God's love and grace for us so that even when life gets hard, we know there will be endless joy when our journey on earth is through.

Pray

Gracious God, You gave Moses and the disciples a glimpse of who You are to help them on their life's journey. Thank You for Your Son, Jesus, through whom you have given us *more* than a glimpse of who You are, so we can trust and rejoice in You. Help us experience in Jesus the deep joy in knowing who You are and how much You love us, so we can be sustained and strengthened in our life's journey until we get to see You face to face. In Jesus' name. Amen.