

Governed by Joy

James 1:2

Introduction

Thematic Statement: When trouble comes, and it will surely come, let joy rule your mind.

ETS: James encouraged persecuted believers to allow joy to govern their minds.

ESS: You and I need to allow joy to govern our minds.

PQ: How shall we accomplish this?

UW: Things

TS: If joy is going to govern our minds, there are at least three things that you and I must realize. Pray with me as we discover these three things from our text.

Body

I. The first thing that you and I must realize is that counting is a thinking process.

- A. James said, "...when you fall into various types of trouble, **COUNT IT** all joy."
 - 1. In this world, trouble is unavoidable. (Job declared, "man that is born of a woman is of but few days, and that is filled with trouble.")
 - 2. Believers have no exemptions from trouble. (Jesus declared to His disciples, "In this world you are going to have trials and tribulations, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.")
- B. God has made you and I "thinking beings." (We have been given the capacity to **THINK!**)

II. The second thing that you and I must realize is that this counting process involves thinking that will rule/govern all of our thoughts.

- A. James is not talking about just an after thought, nor some notion that lingers and lounges around in the back of your mind.
- B. James is talking about a thinking process that will literally govern all of our other thoughts.
 - 1. James used an interesting word for **COUNT**.
 - 2. He used the word "hegeomai."
 - 3. This word is one of 7 Greek words that are translated into English as "count."

4. However, this word is not only translated as “count.” It is also translated on several occasions as “governor,” “chief” and “to go before.”
5. This word literally means to go before, to lead, or to be the leader.
6. James is talking about a thought process will literally “go before” all of our other thoughts.

III. Finally, the third thing that you and I must realize is that this process is fueled by joy.

- A. Joy turns the wheels of our “mind governing thoughts.”
- B. One writer declares, “...the joy of the Lord is your strength.”
- C. The word James used for “joy” is the word normally used. He used the word “chara.”
- D. This word for “joy” is very close to the Greek word for “grace.”
- E. The Greek word for “grace” is “charis.”
- F. These words are sort of like kinfolk, they usually hang out together.
- G. “Chara” is a by-product of having received “charis.”

Illustration

My brother, Bobby, tells the story of how one of his seminary professors took his class to a classroom window to teach them the difference between “grace” and “joy.” As they came to the window, the saw a little bird as he landed on the ground near a discarded piece of a hamburger. The little bird reached and bit off a piece of meat, and while he was enjoying it, the professor said, that’s “grace.” That little bird doesn’t own any cows nor a Burger King, but he’s enjoying what grace has provided him. The little bird reached and bit off a piece of bread, and while he was enjoying it, the professor said, that’s “grace.” That little bird doesn’t own a wheat farm nor a bread company, but he’s enjoying what “grace” has provided him. The little bird reached and bit off a piece of tomato, and while he was enjoying it, the professor said, that’s “grace.” That little bird doesn’t own a farm nor a fruit and vegetable stand, but he’s enjoying what “grace” has provided for him. After dining royally, the little bird hopped over to a puddle of water for a drink, and then decided to take a bath. While he did so, the professor said, that’s “grace.” That little bird doesn’t own a faucet nor a tub, but he’s enjoying what “grace” has provided for him. Bobby said as the class watched the little bird shook himself dry and then flew up into a nearby tree. Nice and comfortably perched on a limb visible to the class, the little bird began to sing. The professor then exclaimed, now that’s joy!

Joy is a by-product of being a recipient of grace!

Conclusion

Recapitulation

1. Counting is a thinking process.
2. This process involves thoughts that will govern our minds.
3. This process is fueled by joy.

Invitation

1. If you have never received Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, you ought to come today. Come and experience His grace. Come and experience this joy. He hung, bled, and died out on Calvary to pay for all of your sins. He rose from the grave to offer us eternal life. Come, there is grace here, for you. Come, there is joy here, for you.
2. If you are already a Christian, but you are prone to give in to the sin of worry and/or doubt, I invite you to start COUNTING!!!

Celebration

An old songwriter said, “Just Think of His Goodness to You...”

Another songwriter said, “Count Your Blessings, Name Them One by One...”

When you start counting, when you start thinking, you’ll realize that while we might not know exactly what God is doing in our lives, we know that His grace is always sufficient. And because we are the recipients of His grace we can experience Joy and Peace, even under pressure...

Listen at verse 3, “Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”

Another New Testament writer put it this way, “For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose.”

Our God is the God who can give us: peace in the middle of a storm; joy in the midst of sorrow.

This joy and this peace can govern your hearts through Christ Jesus, our Lord.

When you’re sick, He’s a doctor; that’s joy. When you’re in trouble, He’s lawyer; that’s joy. You are not able to have a problem that He can’t handle; that’s joy...