



December 1, 2024

Experiencing Joy in a Season of Stress

James 1:2-4 (NLT)

²Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

Sermon Summary:

Tis the season for Christmas trees, traditions and gifts . . . but it's also the season for traffic jams, maxed out credit cards, awkward family get-togethers and sugar-crazed children (not to mention over-indulging adults). The truth is, the holidays are a little more complicated than we'd ever care to admit. Join us as we discover how this season can be one filled with joy rather than the accepted accustom of feeling overwhelmed

Ice Breaker Questions:

1. What is a Christmas song that make you cringe?
2. What is your favorite childhood Christmas show (non-movie)?
3. What's the best Christmas present you have ever received?
4. What's the most stressful part of the Christmas season for you?
5. On a scale of 1-10 (1 is low while 10 is high), how would you rank your seasonal stress-level right now?

Scripture Study Questions:

1. What kinds of trials were the believing Jews going through when James wrote this letter?
2. What is the main message conveyed in these verses?
3. What kind of trials was James referring to in verse 2?
4. Why does James say we should consider trials an opportunity for joy?
5. Explain the connection between your "faith being tested" and "endurance"?
6. In your own words, what is James saying in verse 4?



Application Questions:

1. Describe a time when you experienced a stressful situation that you had to choose to “count it all joy”?
2. How have trials affected your faith – brought you closer to God or pushed you away from God?
3. What are some practical ways to cultivate “endurance” when your faith is tested?
4. How does this passage challenge your perspective on stressful situations?
5. What is a stressful situation that you are going through right now that God could use to grow your faith?