

“How to have a harvest of joy”

“On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison. Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralysed or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city.” (Acts 8:1–8 NIV11)

“God places the best things in life on the other side of terror”

Question: What examples of courage do you see in this passage?

- Joy’s significance
 - *“But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.” (Luke 2:10 NIV1)*
 - *“So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.” (Matthew 28:8 NIV11)*
- God is joyful; Jesus is full of joy; the Holy Spirit provides joy...
 - *“At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.” (Luke 10:21 NIV11)*
 - *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,” (Romans 14:17 NIV11)*
 - *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,” (Galatians 5:22 NIV11)*
 - *“You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Thess 1:6)*
 - Therefore makes sense to pursue joy. How?

Questions

- Where does courage comes from? Matthew 28.20.
- What would living faithfully courageously look like in your life?
- Where do you need more joy?

Three steps to faith-fuelled courage and joyful living:

1. Jesus
2. Open
3. Yes

- People filled with joy attract others
- A church filled with joy attracts others

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