

Joy in the Midst of Suffering

LESSON BY LUKE REYNOLDS (April 25, 2011)

Please read **Psalms 34** with me....We see this idea on every page of the Psalms..... there is honesty. The Psalmists are responding with joy and praise in the midst of suffering. **Psalm 34:2** says "*Hear and Rejoice.*" What is he calling us to hear? Affliction and rejoicing.

This sounds like an oxymoron. You know what an oxymoron is right? Like jumbo shrimp..., freezer burn..., easy labor..., cafeteria food..., happy tears..., or free lunch...!

Joy and suffering can go together. We learn to praise God in the storm. We praise Him in light and dark.

David has to learned to praise the Lord at all times. Is God's name always on our lips? David says his soul will boast in the Lord.... Always. At all times!

This isn't about him, his military accomplishments, or his family, but the Lord.

Just like Jeremiah, he boasts about understanding and knowing God.

David invites us to join him in praising, as a worship leader. He is leading the people in praise.

David knows about betrayal, the death of a child, divorce, marital troubles, and the hardships of being a king that could not even rule on the throne. He was the target of a possessed king. When David made it to Gath, he wanted to slip in unrecognized.

In order to escape he pretends to be mad, he is drooling, and acting crazy. David escapes to a cave but he is still afraid. This is the context of this psalm.

Life is difficult! You can't always take the easy way out! And David admits it in v.19. He knows there are troubles. Just like him we are not immune to suffering. But, just like David, we can go to God when we need help. Do you need help? Are you ready to come to Jesus? If so, come while we stand and sing.....