

# **“Exchanging Sorrow for Joy”**

## **A Cross for a Crown: The Great Exchange #2**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In taking up the cross, Jesus not only became our Savior, He also served as our example. The book of Hebrews tells us Jesus endured the cross because of the joy that was set before Him. In this study we seek to learn what it means to follow His example. By focusing on a few key things, we can exchange our sorrow for joy.

#### **Ice Breaker (Optional):**

What has been the most joyous experience of your life?

### **Study Questions (45 MIN)**

#### **Refocus on the Spiritual**

##### **Q1. Read Matthew 6:24; Hebrews 12:2**

Throughout our lives, many things compete for our attention. If we allow ourselves to focus on the wrong things we will suffer the consequences. What is one consequence of allowing our focus to be drawn away from God (Mat 6:24)? What are some clues you notice to alert you that you need to refocus your attention on God?

Where should we fix our gaze according to Hebrews 12:2? Rather than being the object of our faith, Jesus is called the author and finisher of it. What do you think of as the goal or finished work of your faith?

#### **Focus on the Goal**

##### **Q2. Read Hebrews 5:9; John 17:1-4;**

There are many facets to the “prize” secured by Jesus at the cross; a treasure so joyful that he willingly suffered the pain. What are some of the things that could have brought Him such joy found in the above passages from Hebrews and John?

##### **Read 1 Peter 1:3-4, 5:10; Philippians 3:12-14**

Now consider the goals we have to focus on found in 1 Peter. Paul describes his process of focusing on the goals in Philippians 3:12-14. In our day-to-day lives, how do we “forget what lies behind and reach to what lies ahead”?

#### **Focus on our Identity**

##### **Q3. Read Revelation 12:10; Luke 22:37; Philippians 2:5-11; Romans 8:16-18**

As we face challenges, sorrow and disappointments in our lives, it is easy to allow that to distort how we view our identity, and see ourselves as defeated, or failures. This however, is not the identity we have in Christ, it is the tactic of

our enemy; “the accuser of the brethren.” When Jesus hung on the cross he was “numbered with the transgressors” though He himself was innocent. How did Jesus’ act of obedience to the Father result in the revelation of His true identity (Philippians 2:5-11)? How does God view our identity (Romans 8:16-18)? How might you apply the truth of this scripture to keep your focus on your true identity during times of trials?

#### **Focus on the King**

##### **Q4. Read Revelation 4:2-8; Romans 8:34; Colossians 3:1-2**

What greater way could there be to experience joy than to see Jesus on the throne as John described Him in the book of Revelation? According to Romans 8:34, what is Jesus doing in heaven right now? Because of Christ’s victory on the cross, we are raised with him and our citizenship is in heaven. In Colossians 3:1 Paul exhorts us to seek the things above where Christ is and set our minds on those things. Share with your group one of the spiritual, or heavenly things, that brings you the greatest joy.

### **Wrap-Up**

The Lord sacrificed everything for us. He took on our sin and sorrow that we might receive the joy of salvation. He is our example and we must be alert to refocus on him when other things distract us. We have a future promise to focus on, of such great worth that the suffering of this life pales in comparison. And despite life’s circumstances, our true identity is a child of God, and co-heir with Christ. He is our King, seated on the throne, interceding for us before the Father.

### **Memory Verse**

*fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2 NASB*

### **Prayer (20 MIN)**

*Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more notes)* \_\_\_\_\_

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**Challenge:** *Ask God to keep you aware of your focus this week and be prepared to redirect it to Him.*

### Q1

Matthew 6:24 ESV - 24 "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Hebrews 12:2 NASB - 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### Q2

John 17:1-4 NASB - 1 Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, 2 even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. 3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.

1 Peter 1:3-4 NASB - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

1 Peter 5:10 NASB - 10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

Philippians 3:12-14 NASB - 12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

### Q3

Revelation 12:10 ESV - 10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

Luke 22:37 ESV - 37 For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors.' For what is written about me has its fulfillment."

Philippians 2:5-11 ESV - 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Romans 8:16-18 NLT - 16 For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. 17 And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. 18 Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.

### Q4

Read Revelation 4:2-8 in your Bible

Romans 8:34-35 ESV - 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Colossians 3:1-2 ESV - 1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

### Prayer Notes cont.

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