

Really? How Can I Count It All Joy?

"What Happens Next" Series- Part 02

Share/Connect time: What one thing would you like to change about your high school experience?

What do you think...good advice?

Many years ago, an English pastor and writer, Andrew Murray, was home-bound suffering from back pain, the result of an injury he had incurred years before while on the mission field. One morning while he was eating breakfast in his room, his host told him of a woman downstairs who was in great trouble and wanted to know if he had any advice for her. Murray handed her a paper he had been writing on and said, "Just give her this advice I'm writing down for myself. It may be that she'll find it helpful." This is what he had written:

"In time of trouble, say, 'First, He brought me here. It is by His will I am in this strait place; in that I will rest.' Next, 'He will keep me here in His love, and give me grace in this trial to behave as His child.' Then say, 'He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me lessons He intends me to learn, and working in me the grace He means to bestow.' And last, say, 'In His good time He can bring me out again. How and when, He knows.'

Therefore, say 'I am here (1) by God's appointment, (2) in His keeping, (3) under His training, (4) for His time.'

-["In Time of Trouble Say" \(Andrew Murray\) - VanceChristie.com](http://vancechristie.com/2015/08/29/in-time-of-trouble-say-andrew-murray/)
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During difficult trials, there are many conclusions that are often thrown about. Discuss the truths and errors of the following statements:

1. "The Devil is behind our trials and God would not allow such hurts to come upon us."
2. "If we do not find immediate relief from our trials, then the fault is found in our weak and ineffective "faith".
3. "Suffering is a sign that personal sin reigns in our life."

Book:

Gen 50:15 But now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful. "Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him," they said.

Gen 50:16 So they sent this message to Joseph: "Before your father died, he instructed us

Gen 50:17 to say to you: 'Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.' So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin." When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept.

Gen 50:18 Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said.

Gen 50:19 But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you?"

Gen 50:20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.

Gen 50:21 No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

Let's get into the Word:

In our recent study through the book of James, Pastor Brandon pointed out that a key to handling stressful times is to “*count it all joy*”. All of us would readily admit the difficulty of seeing the joy and good in an experience that is causing hurt, pain, and anxiety. In our Bible text today, we read the story of Joseph, who looked back at a lifetime of hardship and pronounced that he would count the intended results “all joy”!

Is God still in control when others wish to destroy and harm us? How do you know?

If we believe God is in control, how should this affect our feelings of joy? Can you cite an example in your life where this belief helped you through a difficult situation?

How does the following verse impact your thoughts when bad things are happening to you?

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

Gen 50:20 “ You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people”. Why did Joseph believe this to be true and should we believe that God always has good intentions in mind for us when we are hurting?

If we really believe that God intends to do good with and toward us, how might it impact our joy?

How did Joseph respond to those who had at one time conspired to put him to death? What did he actually do for them? How does his action speak to us when it is our turn to respond to those who have done us harm?

How does the following advice given by Andrew Murray apply to Joseph's circumstances?

*Therefore, say ‘I am here (1) by God's appointment,
(2) in His keeping,
(3) under His training,
(4) for His time.’*

Homework:

What difficulty are you undergoing right now? Take some time and write down your thoughts to the following questions:

1. How do I know this is happening by God's appointment in my life?
2. How does it feel to me to know that God is going to “keep, watch, walk with me” though this time?
3. What lessons am I learning? What do I need to practice and cultivate in my life?
4. How can I be patient as I wait upon God?