



A message about finding Joy despite your circumstances

Opening Video: Buzz takes over Woody’s “place” in the Toy Room

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wZM0BZ9vDA&list=FLdHVIU1qp9eLyATbgY_s88g&index=3

OPEN: I wonder if you have ever felt like Woody? One day you are on top of the world, the favorite toy on the bed...the next, you feel like you have lost everything and are neglected in the toy box.

[Leader Note: I gave this message at Christmastime. It works well during the holiday season, but you can edit/adapt for any other time of the year.]

STORY: <SHARE A PERSONAL STORY ABOUT HAPPINESS

TURNING TO SADNESS DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES> I have a renewed love for Christmas. For a long time, I was kind of over it, but then I had kids. I love to see the joy on their faces when I give them a gift that they had been asking for. But, inevitably, that “joy” turns to fighting over something. The smiles turn to sadness towards the end of the day. The laughter turns to stress at the family parties, and I’m left wondering, was it really joy after all?

We are entering into Christmas time where we will begin to see this word JOY written everywhere: On Christmas Ornaments, on Fireplace Mantels, and on Christmas Cards. We hear, “*Joy to the World, Peace on Earth, Good Will towards men (and women)*”. But what I am seeing is a REAL LACK OF JOY in this world.

Whether it is around Christmas, or just a random Tuesday in July, our culture seems to be severely lacking in the joy department. Even in the church the concept of joy doesn’t seem to stand out.”

Instead, what I am seeing (especially in teenagers) are signs and symptoms of stress. Here are some of them:

- 5. Lack of Sleep

- 4. Fear and Anxiety about the Future – College and Work and Family
- 3. Performance in School and Sports
- 2. Stress over Relationships, Feuds with Friends and Parents –TIED - School Anxiety
- 1. TIME MANAGEMENT – You’ve got too much going on in your life. How do you fit cross country training, homework, hockey practice, SAT prep, work, youth group, visiting Grandma, a piano recital, and a nonexistent social life all into one weekend?? AND, you can’t always drive, so you need to depend on the availability of your parents to get you where you need to go!

All of this stress leads to depression. Did you know that depression is not really sadness, it is FRUSTRATION TURNED INWARD? You get so frustrated and stressed that you have nothing to do with those feelings, so they mutate inside of you...and you are left with depression.

STATISTICS SAY: Almost every teenager will suffer with symptoms of Depression at least once during High School. And, at any given time:

- 1 out of every 10 teen guys will be suffering with depression
- 1 out of every 5 teen girls will be suffering with depression
- Not surprised: Almost half of TEEN GIRLS mimic 60% of ADULT WOMEN in feeling pressure to accomplish more than they can handle.

Big Problem: HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO FIND JOY AMIDST ALL OF THIS?

2 Corinthians 6:10 Our hearts ache, but we always have joy. We are poor, but we give spiritual riches to others. We own nothing, and yet we have everything. (NLT)

→The Bible describes joy despite heartache and poverty

→The first thing we need to understand is that there is a difference between JOY and HAPPINESS

HAPPINESS IS JOY BECAUSE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT JOY IS HAPPINESS DESPITE THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

This preview includes a select number of pages from this resource.

If you like what you see, download the entire resource today!

downloadyouthministry.com