

# Did You Know? A Better Story

**DECEMBER 11, 2022**

Can we really experience joy when it feels like everything is terrible? It depends on what story you believe.

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## MESSAGE NOTES AND HIGHLIGHTS

- It's sometimes easy to think that people are the worst, everything is terrible, and what's the point?
  - "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people." | Luke 2, v.10
  - For more on joy, check out "Trade Your Sorrow for Joy" on Epic's YouTube channel.
  - Happiness is shallow. Joy is deep. Happiness is short-term. Joy is long-term. Happiness comes and goes. Joy lasts. Happiness is like a light switch, on and off. Joy is chosen, developed, and practiced. Happiness reacts. Joy transcends.
  - Though you have not seen [Christ], you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy... | 1 Peter 1, v.8
  - ...for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. | 1 Peter 1, v.6
  - Experiencing true joy often goes hand-in-hand with suffering.
  - People are the worst, everything is terrible, what's the point—that's one story you can believe.
  - What story will you choose to believe?
  - The story you choose to believe is the story you will write.
  - When we believe a story, it has ripple effects and consequences.
  - You can believe that there is no good, no evil, no justice. That has consequences.
  - You can believe the story of Jesus. It's a story of hope.
  - "Hope is the conviction...that God is tenacious and persistent in overcoming the deathliness of the world, that God intends joy and peace. Christians find compelling evidence, in the story of Jesus, that Jesus, with great persistence and great vulnerability, everywhere he went, turned the enmity of society toward a new possibility, turned the sadness of the world toward joy, introduced a new regime where the dead are raised, the lost are found, and the displaced are brought home again." | Walter Brueggeman
  - If you believe the story of Jesus, you get to write a better story with your life.
  - Great hope leads to great joy.
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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is something that has discouraged you or frustrated you recently?
2. Do you believe it's possible to have and to experience joy even when it's dark or things are rough?
3. The stories we believe will be the stories we write with our lives. What's an example of a "story" you've believed that affected how you viewed the world or behaved?
4. What about the story of Jesus gives you hope? What inspires you to join in and help write God's story in the world even though things aren't ideal?
5. Key Verse: 1 Peter 1:6-8. Why do you think trials and joy are so closely connected?