

## ENCOUNTER JESUS #7: John 3:22-36 THE PATHWAY TO JOY

Post Covid/lockdown/school closure era: social isolation, family conflict, political divisions, economic struggle – unprecedented rates Anxiety, depression society  
New research from Boston University School of Public Health reveals that an elevated rate of depression has persisted since 2021, and even worsened, climbing to 32.8% 1 in 3 American adults.

### YOUTH STATISTICS DEPRESSION/SUICIDE MORE ALARMING

- Of course Diff clinical depression/feelings of **discouragement** (phys /circ)  
Famine positive feelings emotional strength – prof/family/friend **DRUGS (f)/TECH**  
Using social media can lead to physical and psychological addiction because it triggers the brain's reward system to release dopamine, the “feel-good” chemical. We can use media, social media, online content stimulate feelings otherwise not there.

WD Joy: feeling of pleasure or happiness that comes from success, good fortune, or a sense of well-being. **PROBLEM – U CAN SEE WHERE THE PROBLEM IS...**

**MP: While the pathway to joy is a mystery to the world, it is not a mystery to God.**

Christian joy is a Holy Spirit enabled response to the beauty of Christ, the blessing of His promises, and the fulfillment of His purpose that lifts the heart and soul of the Christian.

**SITUATION:** provoked flesh – TEMPT– WHAT ABOUT YOU? What about ur ministry?

Professional decline, influential decline, numerical **DOWNWARD TREND**

**YOU'VE BEEN BLESSED YOUR BLESSINGS COME FROM HEAVEN (Verse 27)** blessing

**HEART GUARDED:** Anxiety, disappointment, Fear of Loss – INTERNAL TURMOIL

A person cannot receive **even one thing** unless it is given him from heaven.

Ur authority/influence/ability/beauty/intelligence/family/money – MIN/SP GIFTS

ENABLED JOHN TO KEEP HIS MIND PERSPECTIVE / HANDS OPEN TO GOD

- There is a God who gives – lovingly, wisely, personally (**have and don't have**)

**James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.**

- EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING – EVERY TEMPORAL GIFT

- o He didn't get ensnared in tempt bc WASN'T ABOUT HIM. **YEAH! WAIT**

JOHN: waning influence, limited voice, decrease in popularity – **NO PROBLEM**

**KNOW WHO YOU ARE IN THE GRAND SCHEME OF THINGS (Verse 28)** promise

**HEART GUARDED:** insecurity, doubt, loneliness, ego, pride, arrogance

SOLID understanding of where he stood in the grand scheme – **JESUS INFLUENCER**

Ppl struggle insecurity doubt pride and self-assurance – understandable don't know..

- Striving, clawing, fighting, disappointed, doubtful - resigned, just existing

**FRIEND OF JESUS:** a state of enduring affection, esteem, intimacy, and trust between two or more people.

- Knew His place – **Wedding isn't focused best man** – **FRIDAY NO1 BMAN**

BM made a big deal about – stood in place.. steal the show.. **PROBLEM**

**IDENTITY SETTLED:** god's promises deal with our identity issues

John 15:5 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

- **BRIDE - LOVED BY GOD – HIS CHILD – PEACE!!!!**

**FIND YOUR PURPOSE IN GUIDING PEOPLE TO JESUS (Verse)** beauty

**HEART GUARDED:** frustration, confusion, feelings emptiness, meaninglessness, isolate  
John was not an opportunist, he knew joy was not about His opportunities it was about Christ's ascendancy.

1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,

- Joy is seeing the purpose of your ministry fulfilled – **CHRIST INCREASED**

o **INCREASE:** Greater in honor, focus, to grow to the extreme limit

**BEAUTY OF CHRIST - His voice: Rejoicing at his voice – PPL HEAR HIM (your idea, message, song, sale, win on the stock market, house you sold – HE IS DOING IN U**

**MEANINGLESS UNLESS..... CHRIST'S INCREASE IS IN IT. FINISH THE MISSION**

Psychology today. Research shows that individuals who have a strong sense of purpose and meaning in life tend to have better mental health, overall well-being, and cognitive functioning

Our purpose is for Christ to increase, for people to be influenced to love and follow Jesus.

**EASY PATH** angry, bitter, frustrated, disappointed, discouraged, **CHOICE TO REJOICE**

- Choose **JOY – EVEN ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU DON'T WANT TO**

**Psalm 63:7 For you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.**