



FIGHTING FOR

JOY

A wide-angle photograph of a mountain range. The foreground shows a valley with green fields and a winding road. The middle ground and background consist of numerous mountain peaks, some with patches of snow or light-colored rock, receding into the distance under a clear blue sky. The overall tone is serene and majestic.

JOY

IS A

VIRTUE

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16 (NIV 1984)
Be joyful always.

ROMANS 12:12A (NIV 1984)
Be joyful in hope.

"Be Joyful"

God's *commands* are also a *promise*
as to what is *possible* for us **IN CHRIST.**

How do you make yourself feel hope or cheer?

Apply faith to foundational virtues

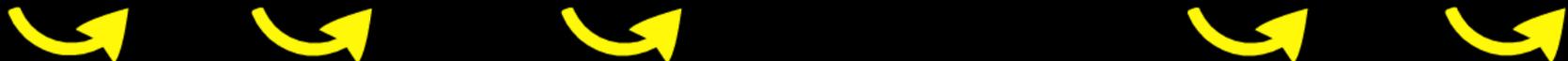
(ie. "Gracious Striving")

Romans 5:3-6

Faith + Suffering = perseverance = character = hope = undissapointed hope (Joy)

2 Peter 1:5 **God's activity** 

Faith goodness knowledge self-control/perseverance godliness kindness/love



The "secret" in plain sight: (opposite of "advocacy fallacy")

1. Believe Jesus (Mind of Christ)¹ Perseverance
2. Doing the good (Sacrificial love)² Nobility
3. Start small, humble & near (in step³ with Spirit) Humility

These also order freedom with virtue⁴

Virtuous Freedom: That we live out true freedom from God by using it for true virtue—to do the good.

Jesus' Goal: To redeem a people that need no rules to live with full beauty and goodness in his creation.

See: Galatians 5:1 ff



How do you make a person like that?

Redeeming
Meaningavores

Why faith?

Why the first three commandments?

4 Facts about meaning that underlie Ecclesiastes:

1. We are meaning Creatures
2. We need cosmic meaning and daily purpose
3. We want to move from the top down like a god
4. God forces us to learn from the bottom up like a creature

Finding meaning in our

Lot and Toil

Ecclesiastes 5:18-20

Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him—for this is his lot. Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God. He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart.

Ecclesiastes 9:7-10

Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for it is now that God favors what you do. Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil. Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your vain days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

Language of Ecclesiastes:

God gives joy to the one who embraces his toil and his lot.

Language of Substance:

God gives daily joy to those that embrace the ordinary.

1. Eat drink and find satisfaction in daily, simple pleasures.

Ecclesiastes 2:23-26

2. Accept life's seasons and times.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

3. Struggle with the key dramas of life.

Ecclesiastes 4:1, 4-6, 9-12

4. Be reverent.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2

5. Find freedom from idolatry to wealth.

Ecclesiastes 5:9-12

6. Know that wisdom is beyond you—but still worth knowing.

Ecclesiastes 7:11-12, 23-29

7. Obey the king.

Ecclesiastes 8:15-17

8. Don't be too narrow in your pursuits or
obsessed with unavoidable risks.

Ecclesiastes 11:1-4

9. Remember God in these things as soon as possible in your life.

Ecclesiastes 12:1

Ecclesiastes 1:13

I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven. What a heavy burden God has laid on men!

Ecclesiastes 3:10-14

I have seen the burden God has laid on men. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him.