

PATHWAY TO JOY

CHAPTER 8 | TEACHING SEGMENT 2

(PLEASE WATCH THE STORY SEGMENTS CONNECTED TO THIS CHAPTER)

OUTLINE

**EVEN IN SORROW, WE CAN FIND THE PATHWAY TO JOY
AS WE REMEMBER GOD'S FAITHFULNESS AND LOVE**

PREMISE:

- The power of **EMPATHY** brings healing as we share our story
- We are wired to walk the pathway of **JOY**

1. FINDING JOY

A. Sharing our story

- When we go through a sorrowful time, it's important to share our story with a sympathetic person. This connection builds empathy and stimulates ideas, thoughts, and emotions in the listener's brain.
- As Ceitci relates her journey of difficult challenges and grief, it connects with empathy in our minds and releases the hope that we too can have victory in dark times.
- Most of the time we connect through hiding, not fully revealing ourselves because of fear of rejection. While we don't want to share our pain with the whole world, we can wisely choose a safe person who can relate to and empathize with our experience.

- If you don't have that person, share your story aloud. The presence of Jesus comes over our lives, and He is the one who can safely transition us from pain to new joy. His presence comforts beyond the presence of another human being.
- Some of Ceitci's treasured times are when she had no one to talk to except the Lord, as she cried out, "Lord, rebuild my joy in the middle of this pain."

B. Wired for joy

- How does the wiring of our brain actually rebuild our joy? When we have the safe attachment of another person, we move to safety, to what Dr. Wilder calls our "joy mountain."
- The longer someone remains on the journey with us, the less fearful we are, and we have a new connection that develops a pathway of safety to return to joy.
- Joy is like a compass guiding you back to core friends, liberating you to remain true to yourself even in hard times.
- Every time you're looking for a new miracle, as you remember the previous one, you're taking the same pathway of joy and walking forward without fear of the future.
- Even if it's the unknown, you can still view it with the resilience inside you because the joy is now present.

C. Establishing joy

- Our joy is established in the Word of God, and as we recall the times spent in His presence, we move safely from the previous memory to the current experience.
- God has a plan; He's not going to leave us. You're not going to be satisfied with the instant gratification of happiness, you're going to search for the joy, walking the pathway with Jesus and seeing your way through every victory.
- Remember...in the middle of the impossibility, God has your back.

2. PATHWAY TO JOY

A. Think yourself happy

- In Acts 26:2, Paul stood before King Agrippa, about to be questioned for his bold witness. His opening statement: “I think myself happy today, King Agrippa, because I get to answer before all of you about the false accusation.”
- In the midst of a desperate time, Ceitci decided to adopt that statement, “I think myself happy.” She told herself to get up and “think herself happy” even when everything was falling apart.
- You can too! Instead of looking at the impossibilities (false accusations, financial or physical challenges, family issues, etc.), choose to think yourself happy. Things begin to look up and your mind begins to rewire itself towards the new thought you introduced in the middle of the circumstance.

B. Give it purpose

- The pathway of joy is established by understanding why we’re going through a challenge. In the times when you don’t understand, give yourself a purpose in the middle of the pain.
- As we’ve learned, when something has happened that you viewed as a negative memory, if you give it a future purpose, it will live in your present with redemptive power rather than pulling you into resentment, bitterness, fear.
- Seasons will change. Sorrow cannot be erased. If you’re going through a season of grief now, don’t hide it away. We will all go through that season at some point, but you don’t want to live there the rest of your life.
- Let the emotions pass through you. Allow the Lord to minister to your heart, and let other people with similar experiences share their story so that your brain can create that empathy path and you can also have empathy for yourself.

C. Expect miracles

- We are often our biggest critics and are hardest on ourselves. Be gentle with your soul. If God cares for you, how much more does He want you to care for what He has placed inside you?
- We don't want to look in the mirror and wonder, "Who is this person? I don't know them anymore." We want to greet ourselves with, "I think myself happy today. God is working out a miracle on my behalf!"
- Being positive doesn't mean weakness; it means you're focusing your thoughts on promises that are true, and training your spirit, soul, and body to be receptive through your RAS to look for those miracles.
- Many times in Ceitci's life, the moment she looked for a miracle, she saw God work on her behalf.
- Let's not be like Mary and Martha, wondering why Jesus is late. He is not late; He is still walking the journey with us.
- Continue to build your way through the painful moments, knowing that you have new resilience because of the joy established in your heart and brain. The pathway to joy is there, waiting for you to access it at any time.

**** PLEASE CONTINUE TO CHAPTER 9**