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God uses
lemons to make
life sweeter!

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WHAT'S IN THIS Study?

DAY 1: Sometimes Life Hands You Lemons

DAY 2: And You Think YOU Have Problems

DAY 3: The Question Isn't Why, It's WHO

DAY 4: God Is There

DAY 5: God Is Always Good

DAY 6: God Is in Control

DAY 7: God Is Our Rock and Refuge

DAY 8: God Is Enough

DAY 9: God Is Trustworthy

DAY 10: God Is Faithful

DAY 11: He Promises His Presence

DAY 12: He Promises He Is Working

DAY 13: He Promises Strength

DAY 14: He Promises Provision

DAY 15: He Promises to Be Faithful



DAY 16: Sweet or Sour?

DAY 17: Thanking God for the Lemons

DAY 18: Finding Good Friends

DAY 19: Helping Others Along the Way

DAY 20: Continue Thinking Truth

Pre - K Level

Ages 2 - 4

In order to take sour lemons
and make lemonade that's sweet,
you have to add some sugar—
that's what makes a tasty treat!

Just as lemonade needs sugar,
our lives need a relationship with God,
who gives us joy in hard times
and makes our lives sweet and good!

→ KEY TRUTH:

We can
choose to be
joyful in God
even when our
lives are not
happy.

📖 JAMES 1:2-4





Place all the ingredient stickers inside the pitcher to make lemonade.

Primary Level

Ages 5 - 7

Now that we have studied some important truths about God and His promises, let's see how all these things affect how we live our lives. God's truth should always change the way we think, speak, and act when dealing with hard things and big emotions.

Read ^{KEY VERSES} **James 1:2-4**. What kind of attitude should Christians have in trials and hard times?

What? We should be joyful about hard things? Are we supposed to pretend to be happy even though what's going on in our lives feels really, really unhappy? Here's the thing: joy and happiness aren't the same!

How would you describe what happiness is?

People often talk about joy and happiness like they are the same thing, but they aren't! Happiness is something we feel when things in life are good and comfortable for us.

Read **Psalms 90:4 and 63:3**. Who do you think these verses are talking about?

These verses are prayers talking about God and His love! Here we see that joy isn't just a feeling based on what's going on around us. Joy is based on our relationship with God.

**We can choose to be joyful in God
even when our lives are not happy.**

Have you heard the saying, "When life hands you lemons, make lemonade"? It's an encouragement to make the best of hard or "sour" things. If you've ever made lemonade, you know that you can't just use lemon juice to make it! To get lemonade, you have to add something really important: sugar!

Just as sugar makes lemonade sweet, our relationship with God and the joy that comes from it make the hard things in our lives sweet and good.

In the pitcher, draw some of the hard things in your life. Review the truths you have learned about God that are listed on the lemon.



God
promises . . .

- His presence
- He is working
- strength
- provision
- to be faithful

and makes
life sweet.



Today, pray and thank God for the joy that comes from a relationship with Him.

Junior Level

Ages 8 - 12

Now that we have studied some important truths about God and some of the promises He has made, let's see how all these things affect how we live our lives. God's truth should always change the way we think, speak, and act when dealing with hard things and big emotions.

Read ^{15 VERSES} **James 1:2-4**. What kind of attitude should Christians have in trials and hard times? **»** _____

What? We should be joyful about hard things? Maybe you feel like it's lying to be joyful when you feel awful or incredibly sad. I know I've felt this way before. Are we supposed to pretend to be happy even though what's going on in our lives feels really, really unhappy?

Here's the thing: joy and happiness aren't the same!

How would you describe what happiness is?

People often talk about joy and happiness like they are the same thing, but they aren't! Happiness is something we feel when things in life are good and comfortable for us.

Read **Psalms 90:14 and 63:3**. Who do you think these verses are talking about?

» _____



These verses are prayers talking about God and His love! Here we see that joy isn't just a feeling based on what's going on around us. Joy is based on our relationship with God. Instead of looking for a feeling of satisfaction and happiness in our life or things we want, we have to come to God to satisfy our desires for love, acceptance, safety, justice, and provision. Then no matter how we feel, we can intentionally choose to be joyful!

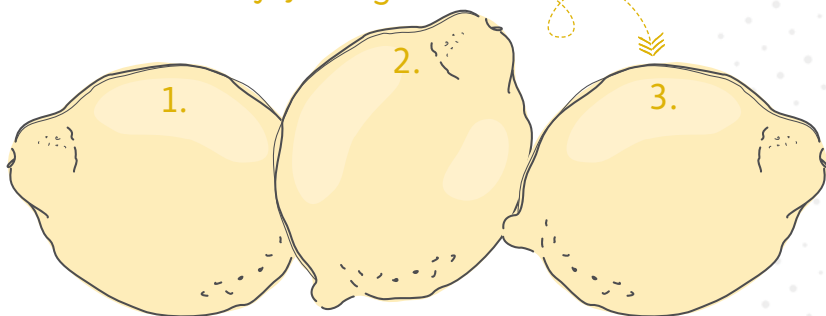
We can choose to be joyful in God even when our lives are not happy.

Have you heard the saying, “When life hands you lemons, make lemonade”? It’s an encouragement to make the best of hard or “sour” things. If you’ve ever made lemonade, you know that you can’t just use lemon juice to make it! To get lemonade, you have to add something really important: sugar!

What do you think is the “sugar” in our lives
that makes us able to handle hard things? » _____

Our relationship with God makes the hard things in life sweet and good, just as sugar makes lemonade sweet. Many people try to make lemonade in their lives by being positive or looking for happiness in other things. But this happiness fades because happiness isn’t what turns sour lemons into sweet lemonade. We need JOY!

What lemons in your life do you need to bring to God so
that you can have the joy He gives?



What’s a reason you can be joyful for these lemons? (Hint: think back to what
you’ve learned about God in this study.)



Trusting God with the hard things doesn’t make them less hard. There will be times when we are still sad or fearful or have heavy, deep emotions. But the joy God gives despite these things will give us the strength we need to continue living for Him and having hope in our lives.

Today, pray that God will help you bring your desires to Him so you can be satisfied by His love. Thank Him for the joy that comes from a relationship with Him.

Youth Level
Ages 13 and up

Now that we have studied some important truths about God and some of the promises He has made, let's take a look at how all these things should affect how we live our lives. God's truth should absolutely change the way we think, speak, and act—especially when experiencing hard things and dealing with big emotions.

Read ^{KEY VERSES} *James 1:2-4*. How should Christians respond to trials and hard times?

Does it surprise you that James would tell us to be joyful about hard things? Maybe you feel like it's not being truthful to be joyful when you feel awful or incredibly sad. I have felt this way before. Am I supposed to pretend to be happy even though what's going on in my life feels really, really unhappy?

Here's the thing: joy and happiness aren't the same!

How would you describe what happiness is?



Read these verses and then record what you learn about joy from each of them.

Psalms 16:11

John 15:10-11

Psalms 63:5-8

Romans 15:13

Psalms 92:4

Galatians 5:22

People often talk about joy and happiness like they are the same thing, but they aren't! Happiness is something we feel when things in life are good and comfortable for us. As you saw in the passages you looked at, though, joy isn't just a feeling based on what's going on around us. Joy is based on our relationship with God!

Read *Psalms 90:14 and 63:3*. What makes us able to rejoice and be joyful?

When we come to God to satisfy all our needs and desires, we are able to rejoice and have joy! Instead of looking for a feeling of satisfaction and happiness in our life situation or things we want, we have to come to God to satisfy our desires for love, acceptance, safety, justice, and provision. Then no matter how we feel, we can intentionally choose to be joyful!

We can choose to be joyful in God
even when our lives are not happy.

Maybe you've heard the saying, "When life hands you lemons, make lemonade." This saying points us to the process of making lemonade as an encouragement to make the best of hard things. If you've ever made lemonade, you know that lemon juice isn't the only ingredient! To get lemonade from sour lemon juice or lemon water, you have to add something really important: sugar!

What do you think is the "sugar" in our lives that makes us able to handle hard things?

Just as sugar makes lemonade refreshing, enjoyable, and sweet, the hard things in life are made sweet and good through our relationship with God. Many people try to make lemonade in their lives by being positive or looking for happiness in people, wealth, or exciting experiences. But this happiness fades. Happiness isn't what turns sour lemons into sweet lemonade. We need JOY!

The solution of "making the best of hard things" is only possible when we have a relationship with God through which we receive His joy! Then we can trust Him and have joy even when we are going through really hard things in life.

What lemons in your life do you need to bring to God so that you can have the joy He gives?

Next to each glass of lemonade, note a reason you can be joyful.

The sour

 _____ =  _____

 _____ =  _____

 _____ =  _____

 _____ =  _____

The sweet

»»»

(Hint: think back to what you've learned about God in this study.)

Trusting God with the hard things doesn't make them less hard. There will be times when we are still sad or fearful or have heavy, deep emotions. But the joy God gives despite these things will give us the strength we need to continue living for Him and having hope in our lives.

Today, pray that God will help you bring your desires to Him so you can be satisfied by His love. Thank Him for the joy that comes from a relationship with Him.

Parent Guide

Now that we have studied some important truths about God and some of the promises He has made, let's take a look at how all these things should affect how we live our lives. God's truth should absolutely change the way we think, speak, and act—especially when we experience hard things and deal with heavy emotions.

Read ^{KEY VERSES} *James 1:2-4*. How should Christians respond to trials and hard times?

Does it surprise you that James would tell us to be joyful about hard things? Maybe you feel like it's not being truthful to be joyful when you feel awful or incredibly sad. I have felt this way before. Am I supposed to pretend to be happy even though what's going on in my life feels really, really unhappy?

Here's the thing: joy and happiness aren't the same!

How would you describe what happiness is?



Read these verses and then record what you learn about joy from each of them.

Psalms 16:11

John 15:10-11

Psalms 63:5-8

Romans 15:13

Psalms 92:4

Galatians 5:22

People often talk about joy and happiness like they are the same thing, but they aren't! Happiness is something we feel when things in life are good and comfortable for us. As you saw in the passages you looked at, though, joy isn't just a feeling based on what's going on around us. Joy is based on our relationship with God!

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We can choose to be joyful in God even when our lives are not happy.

Maybe you've heard the saying, "When life hands you lemons, make lemonade." This saying points us to the process of making lemonade as an encouragement to make the best of hard things. If you've ever made lemonade, you know that lemon juice isn't the only ingredient! To get lemonade from sour lemon juice or lemon water, you have to add something really important: sugar!

What do you think is the "sugar" in our lives that makes us able to handle hard things?

If you have younger kids, make some lemonade without sugar and let them taste it. Then have them add sugar to see the difference. This will help illustrate what we are learning in this study.

Just as sugar makes lemonade refreshing, enjoyable, and sweet, the hard things in life are made sweet and good through our relationship with God. Many people try to make lemonade in their lives by being positive or looking for happiness in people, wealth, or exciting experiences. But this happiness fades. Happiness isn't what turns sour lemons into sweet lemonade. We need JOY!

The solution of "making the best of hard things" is only possible when we have a relationship with God through which we receive His joy! Then we can trust Him and have joy even when we are going through really hard things in life.

What lemons in your life do you need to bring to God so that you can have the joy He gives?

Next to each glass of lemonade, note a reason you can be joyful.

The sour



=





=



The sweet

(Hint: think back to what you've learned about God in this study.)

Trusting God with the hard things doesn't make them less hard. There will be times when we are still sad or fearful or have heavy, deep emotions. But the joy God gives despite these things will give us the strength we need to continue living for Him and having hope in our lives.

Today, pray that God will help you bring your desires to Him so you can be satisfied by His love. Thank Him for the joy that comes from a relationship with Him.

Scripture: James 1:2-4

Key Truth: We can choose to be joyful in God even when our lives are not happy.

Discussion: What is the difference between happiness and joy? How do we have joy?



INCLUDES:



MAKING LEMONADE:

Trusting God through life's struggles



FEAR NOT:

Quieting fear and anxiety with God's truth



DON'T BLOW UP:

Seeking God's way instead of anger



LETTING GO:

Choosing forgiveness over bitterness



ABOUNDING IN HOPE:

How to resist hopelessness and despair

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MAKING LEMONADE

We all get handed lemons at some point in life—sometimes these hard things seem absolutely overwhelming! But we get to choose what we do in those hard times. Will we get stuck asking WHY all these hard things have happened? Or will we trust the One who holds us no matter what?

Making Lemonade is a study that dives deep into the truth we need in order to handle the hard things in life and the heavy feelings that come with them. When we know the truth of WHO our God is, we are able to trust and obey Him, even in hard times.



ML-J

