

# The Sudden Turn of Joy

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By Study Guide Writing Team | New Year's Day, 2017

The Sudden Turn of Joy

*1 Thessalonians 1:2-6*

**Review:** How has God responded to your prayers for those praises, anxieties and requests that members of the group made known in last week's discussion?

**Introduction:** JRR Tolkien describes "The consolation of fairy-stories, the joy of the happy ending; or more correctly of the good catastrophe, the sudden joyous "turn" (for there is no true end to any fairy-tale): this joy, which is one of the things which fairy-stories can produce supremely well, is not essentially "escapist," nor "fugitive." In its fairy-tale -- or otherworld -- setting, it is a sudden and miraculous grace: never to be counted on to recur. It does not deny the existence of dyscatastrophe, of sorrow and failure: the possibility of these is necessary to the joy of deliverance; it denies (in the face of much evidence, if you will) universal final defeat and in so far is evangelium, giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy, Joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief."

Paul's opening remarks in his first letter to the Thessalonians give thanks to God for the people who have whole heartedly accepted the 'Good News' (gospel). Today Earl focuses on four great words in our text: Faith, Hope, Love and Joy.

**Pray:** Lord, help us to understand Paul's letter. Give us the willingness to receive your spirit and the boldness to imitate the faith of the Thessalonians. Amen.

**Read:** 1 Thessalonians 1:2-6.

### Discussion:

1. Faith produces work. How does your faith result in work?
2. Hope leads to endurance. How have you endured, inspired by hope?
3. Love prompts labor. How has love prompted your labor?
4. Joy comes from receiving the word. How have you been joyful in the midst of affliction?
5. Describe the tie between the gospel (good news) and joy in Paul's word.

Describe how this is true in your own life.

**Application:** This week pay attention to 'the sudden turn of joy' in your life.

**Pray:** Lord, we are thankful for one another. Help us to live in faith that is fruitful, anchored in the hope that sustains us in life's challenges, and motivated by love. Remind us of the joy you give us and help us to delight in it. Amen.