

# Unleashing Joy

Psalm 16

## Happiness

Happiness is an attitude of satisfaction or delight based upon some present circumstance. Happiness is related to happenings. Happiness is related to happenstance. When we talk about joy, we're not talking about something that's related to chance at all. We're not talking about something that's related to circumstances at all. We're talking about a deep down confidence that all is well, no matter what the circumstance, no matter what the difficulty, no matter what the problem. And that's very different from happiness. Joy is completely impossible without God. And also completely possible with God...no matter what.

## Joy

Joy, to be understood in a biblical sense, must be understood in relation to God. It must be understood to be that which becomes yours in Christ. It must be understood to be a permanent possession of every believer, not some whimsical delight that comes and goes as chance may offer it opportunity.

## Definition of Joy

Joy comes from God...

It is a gift of God. In Psalm 4:7-8 it says,

*You have put more joy in my heart  
than they have when their grain and wine abound.*

...to those who believe the gospel...

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Christ came to proclaim a gospel that would give men joy.

... being produced in them by the Holy Spirit...

Galatians 5:22 "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy"

The Holy Spirit brings to the heart righteousness, peace, and joy.

... as the believer receives and obeys the Word...

Jeremiah 15:16: "Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart."

When you receive this word and apply this word, you experience full joy.

... being mixed with various trials...

1 Thessalonians 1:6 says, "You also became imitators of us and of the Lord having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit." 2 Corinthians 6:10 "As sorrowful yet always rejoicing."

... and set their hope on future glory...

Romans 12:12 "rejoicing in hope." 1 Peter 4:13 "But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed." In other words, endure with joy now, because you know the joy that is to come.

True joy is a gift from God to those who believe the gospel, being produced in them by the Holy Spirit as they receive and obey the Word, being mixed with various trials, and set their hope on future glory. That's the definition of joy in a sentence.

## The Problem

There are many Christians that are "spiritually depressed." If joy is the emotion of salvation why do many Christians struggle to experience joy? Some are those who live trying to balance both the desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit. They call on the name of Christ, but they still try to find security, satisfaction, pleasure, or fulfillment from this world.

## Yes to God

It is important for every Christian to be convinced that God is good. And what's more — God alone is good.

## No to Everything Else

Satan tempts us to think we can find something good and satisfying apart from God. But we must declare a strong, resounding "No" to anything that promises good without him. This great "No" is at the heart of Christian joy.

## When Am I To Be Joyful

Philippians 4:4 says "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice." So "always." The first part of always is when you cannot rejoice in anything or anyone but God. The second part of always is when you have other things to rejoice in.

## Run to Jesus

We have to be active in our pursuit of joy. We are to go directly to the source and we do not need to be full of joy to come before God. It okay to come to the Lord weary, beaten, broken down, and without joy. He will take you in.

## Confess

The first thing we need to do in coming to God is check for guilt and bitterness. Jim Wilson: "Guilt is what we feel when we sin, and bitterness is what we feel when others sin against us."

## Ask

Make sure you ask. Ask regularly. "But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." Psalm 51 "Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit." Psalm 85:6, Psalm 86:3-4

Ask like David asks. God please restore to me the joy of your salvation and fill my soul with joy.

## Read the Word

There is nothing that we are to have or cultivate or grow in where being in the word is not an answer. Jeremiah 15:16 again.

Your words were found, and I ate them,

and your words became to me a joy

and the delight of my heart,

for I am called by your name,

O Lord, God of hosts.

Be in the word. Regularly. It is not just another thing that you have to do every day. It is life and being in the word will produce joy and be the delight of your heart.

## Little Things

Find joy in little things. If it is hard to find joy in the big things right away, then rejoice in little things. There are always ways to rejoice. Always things that God has given that you can rejoice over.

## God Goggles

How are you looking at a situation or an event? Do you think God is looking at it the same way? Having trouble finding joy in your life? Put on your God goggles and try to imagine how God sees them.

## Tell Your Face

Joy must come out. Joy will shine through.

Luke 11:33-36 "If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light."

You cannot put on a fake smile and call it joy. In fact if you have joy, you won't even have to try. The joy will leak out your face. It will come out in other ways as well. The Bible shows us numerous times how joy manifests itself. Sing for joy. Shout for joy. Be filled with joy. Be jubilant with joy. Eat with joy. Dance for joy. Rejoice.

## Conclusion

When God starts unleashing the joy in you it becomes infectious. It spreads. John 13:35 "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." I think that goes for joy too. A deep abiding joy is something the world does not have and cannot understand. And they will see it in you and wonder how in the world you can look at life that way. Why are you so positive? Are you always that way? People want that. The soul longs for it.

1 Peter 1:3-9

You rejoice with a joy that is inexpressible. Inexpressible means too strong to be described or conveyed in words. You can't describe it, but you are changed because of it. It changes you countenance, your outlook, your actions, your interactions. Once joy is unleashed in you, you will not look the same and you will not act the same.