

DEVOTION EIGHTEEN.

Joy In The Everyday



Finding JOY in the Lord will be key to your survival mentally, spiritually and dare I say physically over this season (you use over 100 muscles when you laugh uncontrollably- FYI). Unlike happiness, this fruit of the Spirit stays with you throughout the good and bad times. So, what does the Bible say about joy?

As you look at the pages of the Bible, you'll find it has *a lot* to say about joy. Perhaps, one of the best places to begin is in the book of Psalms. When we explore the Psalms, we find regular mentions of joy. We see where God's people, and the peoples of the earth, are commanded to "shout for joy". We discover joy in the Psalms is often connected with singing and with our great salvation (Ps 71:23).

For example, in Psalm 63:7, the Psalmist says "*for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing with joy*". As Christians, joy comes as a result of reflecting on the goodness and greatness of our God.

Joy is good for you

There are many benefits to joy. The book of Proverbs tells us that "a joyful heart is good medicine" (17:22).

Interestingly enough, the Bible tells us that we are to have joy even in the hard times (Jc 1:2). But wait a minute! Doesn't God want us to be happy all the time? How can we be joyful when we're going through bad times? I'm glad you asked. Many people mistake joy with happiness, but there is a big difference between the two. Happiness is temporary; joy is not. It may be helpful to take another look at that passage from James to see why:

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (James 1:2-4, ESV).

The reason that we are to have joy in the hard times is because we're looking not just at what's going on now, but to the future. We're looking at the end result. What we ultimately want to be, says James, are people who are "perfect," complete," and "lacking nothing." Now, when he uses this language, he doesn't mean that we can be perfect in the absolute sense. Only God is perfect that way. What he's getting at is that we need to "count it all joy" because these trials lead to a mature Christian faith. We have joy because we trust God, and we trust that He knows what He is doing, even when things get rough.

How do I find joy in hard times?

Let's consider some steps to help with incorporating the virtue of joy into our lives:

- **Step 1:** Read the book of Psalms, notice how even in some of moments of grief, the Psalmist still finds God's peace and joy.
- **Step 2:** Meditate on who God is? What has He done for you?
- **Step 3:** Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with joy!
- **Step 4:** Ask the Lord to reveal any sin that might be in your life that's keeping you from experiencing His joy.
- **Step 5:** Begin looking for ways that you can replace complaining with rejoicing.
- **Step 6:** Feed your brain with things that bring you joy!

I'll end with some good advice from Jesus's servant, Paul: "*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice!*" (Phil 4:4)



JOY. For KING and COUNTRY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IA7n7TwPDmw>



How can you bring joy to those around you? Sometimes, sharing a conversation or smile is enough!

USE YOUR SMILE TO
CHANGE THE WORLD,
DON'T LET THE WORLD
CHANGE YOUR
SMILE.

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