

## Aspects of Joy

**Intro:** Are you a "Tigger" or an "Eeyore"? - Some of us are naturally outgoing and positive. Others tend to a gloomy outlook. A Biblical view of joy goes beyond natural. Do you have "Deep joy" but never express it? Is joy the same as happiness? - The world says - It's just around the corner. Work hard - keep going. C. S. Lewis saw a clear distinction between joy, [pleasure](#), and [happiness](#): "*I sometimes wonder whether all pleasures are not substitutes for Joy.*" ... anyone who has experienced it will want it again... I doubt whether anyone who has tasted it would ever, if both were in his power, exchange it for all the pleasures in the world. But then Joy is never in our power and Pleasure often is."

### **What the Bible says:**

The joy of the Lord. Comes from God - divine origin A gift from Jesus. "**Joy** is an invaluable gift of God that radiates to others. There are so many **Bible** verses about **joy** that share that God simply wants to give us the gift of **joy** when we choose to trust in Him: ... **Biblical joy** is a gift that we don't have to summon ourselves."

Part of the fruit of the Spirit which grows in us. Can't be worked up . "be Joyful always" Example of Paul especially the Letter to the Philippians. He mentions joy, rejoicing or gladness 19 times "Rejoice in the Lord always." He certainly didn't have a trouble free life. What was his secret?

**SAVING JOY:** when I want more joy, what I'm really wanting is more Jesus. **Joy is simply the signpost that points us to Jesus.** Lewis discovered this, too.

The source of our Joy is that we are saved. We can have no true joy until we have met with Jesus, seen Him for what He has done for us and asked forgiveness for our sins. Wesley

he reluctantly attended a meeting in Aldersgate. Someone read from Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to Romans*. About 8:45 p.m. "while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." We may not have had a Damascus road experience as Paul did, But do we know that we know that we know that Jesus loves us so much that he was prepared to die for us - that if we ask Him into our lives He will be with us forever and nothing can separate us from that love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." John 15:11

You may remember singing " I am a new creation ... a joy that knows no limit". If that confidence has dimmed, if our Christian life has become a chore we need to pray as David prayed

Psalms 51:12 " Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me." In Nehemiah 8:9-10 we read " Stop mourning and weeping." (This was because all the people wept when they heard the words of the Law.)<sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat, drink the sweet *drink*, and send portions to

those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

The Message paraphrases Paul's call to "Rejoice in the Lord" in Phil 3:1 as "Be glad in God" (Msg) We could be people of gladness because of what Jesus has done for us. Peter wrote: Peter 1:8-9 <sup>8</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup> for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls".

## **FULLNESS OF JOY:**

Psalms 16:11 "in thy presence *is* fullness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore." You will fill me joy in Your presence.

Jesus said "I came that they may have *and* enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows]." amp.

That's what God wants for us. A good life in Him where we are secure and content in His presence.

This doesn't mean that we don't come up against difficulties and problems, especially suffering for the faith. Paul knew this only too well. He suffered ridicule, beatings, ship wreck and imprisonment yet he could say:

"I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances."

Our contentment, our joy doesn't depend on our circumstances but on our relationship with Jesus.

There are things which can be real "joy stealers" if we will let them. **But there is always an answer in Jesus.**

There are those **circumstances** over which we have no control. Paul says "Be content"

There are other **people** who can hurt us, upset us, bug us.

Paul says " <sup>3</sup> Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup> And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

**The enemy** can attack us in our thoughts. he doesn't want us to be happy in Jesus. Brings doubts, questions, diversions. worries.

Jesus tells us not to worry about these things. Keep our minds fixed on Him.

Count it a privilege " <sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, <sup>[a]</sup> whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

Be sure of our faith "I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day".

## EVERLASTING JOY:

Isaiah 35:10 "and those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away."

There is so much mention of joy in the Bible.

In the Old Testament the faithful people are called often to rejoice before the Lord - at the birthday of Jesus practically every part of the story is accompanied by joy - great joy - from the announcement of His birth through the angels announcement and every visit to the new born and His dedication in the Temple.

And this reflects the joy of heaven.

Our Joy in the Lord is an everlasting joy It is something we are looking forward to.

That's what kept Jesus going

"**For the joy that was set before him** he endured **the** cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at **the** right hand of **the** throne of God." Hebrews

It was what kept Paul going.

2Cor.4(The Message)

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all"

.<sup>16-18</sup> So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace. These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever."

Jude

To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—

Romans 15

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.