

Joy Promised by God

Joy is found 192 times in the New King James Version of the Bible. **Rejoice** is found 238 times. Obviously, joy and rejoicing are very important to God.

Joy is the pleasant emotional response evoked by well-being, success, good fortune, or by the prospect of possessing what one desires. It is a deep feeling of happiness or contentment. Many people in the world stop being happy as soon as they face difficulty or suffer pain or loss. Their happiness is based entirely on feeling good about what is happening now. This shallow, superficial happiness is dependent on their current situation or external circumstances.

On the other hand, in the Bible **joy is a gift from God** and is not dependent on external circumstances. **The joy of the Lord** enables Christians to find hope, peace, and contentment even when life seems to fall apart.

In this lesson we will discover how to find and maintain the **joy promised by God** even during tough times.

Joy is found in the presence of God. Psalm 16:11, "You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is **fullness of joy**; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

This joy often follows weeping, suffering, and tragedy. Psalm 30:5, "For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; weeping may endure for a night, but **joy comes in the morning.**"

Yes, God can bring joy out of suffering. Psalm 126:5-6, ⁵ "Those who sow in tears shall **reap in joy.** ⁶ He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Joy can even be restored after it is lost. Psalm 51:12, "Restore to me the **joy of Your salvation**, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit."

King David shows us that a person who has messed up his life can be happy again. The sun always shines following a storm. Many people have experienced wealth, poverty, and the return of wealth. Others have experienced health, sickness, and recovered health. Life has its ups and downs like a roller coaster.

The joy of the Lord provides strength. Nehemiah 8:10, "Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for **the joy of the Lord is your strength.**'"

How does the joy of the Lord remain with us? How can we have full or complete joy? John 15:11, "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and **that your joy may be full.**"

We need to listen to the words that Jesus spoke and keep His commandments. Full and complete joy can only be found by those who love God and Jesus.

No one can take the joy of salvation away from you. John 16:22, "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your **joy no one will take from you.**"

Only you can give up your joy. Do not let anyone steal your joy.

Jesus desires that your joy may be full. John 16:24, "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, **that your joy may be full.**"

Jesus says to ask for joy. You must seek joy in the right places.

You can feel happy and full of joy when you help someone in need. Luke 15:5-7, ⁵ "And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, **rejoicing.** ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, '**Rejoice** with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' ⁷ I say to you that likewise there will be **more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents** than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance."

There is satisfaction in making someone else feel good. It gives us joy when we give others hope by giving them help. As you give joy, you will receive joy. Joy increases as you give it away. Joy diminishes as you try to keep it to yourself.

Paul remained joyful during tribulation. 2 Corinthians 7:4, "Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly **joyful in all our tribulation.**" Paul received comfort and encouragement from others.

He knew that the results of his work were worth the sacrifice.

Abundant joy can exist in the midst of a great trial of affliction and deep poverty.

2 Corinthians 8:2, "that in a great trial of affliction the **abundance of their joy** and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality." It helps to focus on others instead of yourself.

We should consider it all joy when we face the various trials of life. James 1:2-4, ² "My brethren, **count it all joy** when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."

Trials test us and strengthen our faith. They produce endurance and help us grow into maturity.

We are commanded to rejoice in the Lord always in all circumstances! Philippians 4:4, "**Rejoice** in the Lord always. Again I will say, **rejoice!**" Paul was in prison when he wrote this. With God's help we can create our own happiness regardless of our situation.

God wants you to make it a habit to be happy. Psalm 118:24, "This is the day the Lord has made; we will **rejoice** and be glad in it."

Abraham Lincoln said, "Most people are just about as happy as they make up their mind to be." When I get up in the morning, I have two choices, either to be happy or unhappy. I choose to be happy.

Take Action!

What will you do to receive God's promise of full and complete joy? Review the Scriptures in this lesson to discover how to experience and keep the joy of the Lord.

The **joy of salvation** begins when we become a Christian. **Acts 8:35-39,** ³⁵ "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. ³⁶ Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' ³⁷ Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' ³⁸ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. ³⁹ Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and **he went on his way rejoicing.**" When our life is over, we want to hear these words from our Lord in **Matthew 25:21,** "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. **Enter into the joy of your lord.**"