

“Joy”
Who Am I Becoming?—Part 2
Various Scriptures

Key Question:

What gives us true contentment in life?

To understand contentment, we first need to understand the difference between **joy** and **happiness**.

*You will make known to me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.*
—Psalm 16:11

- Happiness comes and goes. Joy can be **constant**.
- Happiness is dependent. Joy is **independent**.
- Happiness is conditional. Joy is **unconditional**.

God’s Word definitely speaks to happiness, but joy goes so much further.

- Joy comes from **God** and is a permanent **possession** of every believer.
- Joy is nurtured in the believer by **the Holy Spirit** as we walk in obedience to His Word.
- Joy will be mixed with **trials**.
- Joy sets our hope on our **future glory**.
- Joy is a confidence built on a **relationship**.

Key Idea:

Despite my circumstances, I can know inner contentment and understand my purpose in life.

Joy has more to do with remaining in the **presence of Jesus** than with avoiding problems and struggles in our lives.

Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.
—Philippians 4:11-13

One of the great things about the substance of joy is that it comes out of **being content**.

True joy is an **unwavering constant** in a Spirit-filled life.

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

—James 1:2-4

For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

—Hebrews 12:10-11

We can rejoice because we can **see beyond** the trials.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy. Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world. Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.”

—John 16:20-22

We are privileged to have our faith **tested**.

“Our values determine our evaluations. If we value comfort more than character, then trials will upset us. If we value the material and physical more than the spiritual, we will not be able to count it all joy. If we live only for the present, and forget the future, then trials will make us bitter, not better.”

—Warren Wiersbe

Key Application:

What difference does this make in the way I live?

The measure of your joy is not how you react to the way you would like things to be. It's how you react to the way you wouldn't like things to be.

- What's your reaction when you get a raise?
- What's your reaction when God says no, it's not the right time for a raise?
- What's your reaction when you don't get the raise you thought you were going to get?
- What's your reaction when you don't get the raise you knew you deserved?

Remember, joy comes out of your closeness to Christ. Where are you right now?

- Are you content when things go wrong?
- Do circumstances dictate your mood?
- Are you excited about the purpose of your life?
- Are you content right where you are, right now, with your money and possessions?

Happiness is about what aligns with what I want. Joy is about what aligns with what God wants.

The joy of Christ will reduce stress.

God's joy in us becomes a filter through which we can view life. We're viewing through the eyes of Jesus and not our own.

The joy of Christ will become contagious through you.

Did you know that Christ's joy is contagious? Even amongst people who don't know Jesus Christ, they can tell something is different about you.

“There is a marvelous medicinal power in joy. Most medicines are distasteful; but this, which is the best of all medicines, is sweet to the taste, and comforting to the heart. This blessed joy is very contagious. One sorrowful and distressful spirit brings a kind of plague into the house; one person who is wretched seems to stop all the birds from singing wherever he goes... [But] the grace of joy is contagious. Holy joy will oil the wheels of your life's machinery. Holy joy will strengthen you for your daily labor. Holy joy will beautify you and give you an influence over the lives of others.”
—Charles Spurgeon