

**TITLE: JOY**

**INTRO:** Life is full of emotional ups and downs, even if you're a Christian. Paul himself had plenty of things that bothered him (persecution, concern for the saints, etc., see 2 Cor 11, 12), yet he also was able to rejoice. How can a Christian rejoice, even in the midst of pain and suffering? How can a Christian rejoice, even in a country that more and more wants to have nothing to do with God? Let's look at some biblical examples of joy and rejoicing – when and why to rejoice.

**I. DEFINITION OF TERMS:**

- A. Joy (Greek - 'chara') – joy, gladness, cheerfulness
- B. Rejoice (Greek - 'chairō') – rejoice, be glad, be full of cheer
- C. What joy is:
  - 1. A quality, not just an emotion (although emotion is definitely a part of it)!
  - 2. Fullness of joy is only with God (Psa 16:11 – “in thy presence is fullness of joy, and in thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore”; Phil 4:4 – rejoice in the Lord; Rom 15:13 – God...fill you with all joy)
- D. What joy is not:
  - 1. Joy is not limited to an *outward* expression ... one can be experiencing joy without expressing it.
  - 2. Joy is not cyclical, as with happiness (one day you're happy, another day you're sad...this is normal). Joy allows a peaceful type of contentment regardless of your life situation (e.g., Paul's joy in suffering).

**II. WHEN TO REJOICE:**

- A. When hearing/receiving the word
  - 1. Mt 13:20 – he that receives the word into stony places hears the word and receives it with joy.
  - 2. Mt 13:44 – kingdom is like treasure; when a man finds it...for joy he buys the field
  - 3. Lk 19:6 – Zacchaeus received Jesus joyfully
  - 4. 1 Thess 1:6 – the Thessalonians “received the word with much affliction (**Ac 17:1-9**), with joy of the Holy Spirit”
- B. When becoming a Christian (conversion examples)
  - 1. Acts 8:39 – the eunuch, after coming up out of the water, “went on his way rejoicing.”
  - 2. Acts 16:34 – Philippian jailer – rejoiced *after* conversion (i.e., *after* baptism)
- C. When evangelizing
  - 1. John 4:36 – Evangelism - the sower and reaper rejoice together
  - 2. Ac 15:3 – great joy brought to the brethren at the news of the Gentiles' conversion
  - 3. 1 Thess 2:19-20 – “What is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing...are not ye in the presence of Jesus Christ at his coming?”
- D. When in trials
  - 1. Lk 6:22-23 – Rejoice when men hate you for the Son of man's sake
  - 2. 2 Cor 7:4 – I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation
  - 3. Phil 2:16-18 – If I be offered on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.
  - 4. Col 1:11 – strengthened with all might...unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness
  - 5. Heb 10:34 – you took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing you have in heaven a better and enduring substance.
  - 6. 1 Pet 1:6-8 – in Christ, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory
  - 7. 1 Pet 4:12-13 – Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy
  - 8. Acts 5:41 – rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name
  - 9. Jam 1:2 – count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations
- E. When a brother or sister repents and returns
  - 1. Lk 15:7, 10 – Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repents
  - 2. 2 Cor 7:9 – “I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance.” Rejoice when a brother repents.
  - 3. 3 John 4 – I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth
- F. When there is an opportunity to give
  - 1. 2 Cor 8:2 – (of the Macedonian brethren) how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.
  - 2. 2 Cor 9:7 – for God loveth a cheerful giver
- G. When we're with brethren
  - 1. Phil 1:25 – In Paul's predicament, he knew he would stay for their “joy of faith”
  - 2. Phil 2:2 – “Fulfill ye *my* joy...be likeminded” – There's Christian joy in being like-minded!
  - 3. 2 Tim 1:4 – Paul's desire to see Timothy, “that I may be filled with joy”
  - 4. Rom 12:15; 1 Cor 12:26 – Christians rejoice with other Christians who are rejoicing

### III. WHY TO REJOICE:

- A. Rejoice because it is commanded!
  - 1. Gal 5:22 – fruits of the spirit (love, joy...)
  - 2. Phil 4:4 – Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say Rejoice.
  - 3. Heb 3:6 – ...whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.
- B. Rejoice because Christ came
  - 1. Lk 1:44 - John the baptist leapt for joy in the womb when Mary arrived carrying Jesus.
  - 2. Mt 2:10 - shepherds rejoiced when they saw the star
  - 3. Lk 2:10 - angel told the shepherds, "I bring good tidings of great joy!"
- C. Rejoice because Christ suffered, died, and was resurrected
  - 1. Mt 28:8 – they departed from the sepulcher with joy
  - 2. Lk 24:52 – they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem w/great joy
  - 3. 1 Pet 2:24 – By his stripes we are healed (Isa 53) – Here is our reason to rejoice!
- D. Rejoice because of our hope (heaven)
  - 1. Mt 25:21 – To the sheep, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant... Enter thou into the joy of the lord."
  - 2. Rom 5:2 – In Christ we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand (i.e., we've become Christians), and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.
  - 3. Rom 5:11 – we joy because we have received atonement (rejoicing in hope – Rom 12:12)

### IV. WHY MIGHT CHRISTIANS NOT REJOICE?:

- A. They don't really believe. Many in the church are too often just going through the motions. Church is something they're *supposed* to do. Maybe they don't rejoice because they don't really think they were ever really lost!
  - 2 Peter 1:9 – "But he that lacketh these things (v. 5-7 – faith, virtue, knowledge, etc.) is blind...and hath forgotten he was purged from his old sins."
- B. Their eyes are too focused on the world...too interested in what they *don't* have.
  - 1. How can I be joyful when I don't have a new car, boat, or motorcycle? Or a bigger retirement account?
  - 2. These attitudes are evidence that our focus is on the wrong things. We're too enamored with the few minutes we have in this life (and all its toys & goodies) and not enough with an eternity in Heaven!

**CONCLUSION:** Joy doesn't require *outward* emotion as its evidence (as we've already discussed). We say this because of the misconception of joy that says we need to be jumping up and down yelling and screaming! This is obviously not the case. \*However, joy does bring emotion that is displayed in a proper way and at the proper time. Do you, on a daily basis, remember that you were lost, but are now promised a home in Heaven because of your obedience to the gospel? This brings a comfort that can't be matched by anything the world offers!