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At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. Luke 10v21

Where did Jesus joy come from?

In this verse, what made Jesus happy?

What sort of things should give you joy?

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The association between joy and the Holy Spirit is very strongly made in the New Testament. Cf Psalm 45v7
And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. Acts 13v52, Romans 15v13
Joy given by the Holy Spirit. 1Thessalonians 1v6

What implications does this have for us?

It is the testimony of many people that the baptism in the Holy Spirit brought about a real and lasting joy in their life. Ask God to fill and refill your life with the His Spirit.

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For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, Romans 14v17

What does this mean?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, Galatians 5v22

What does it mean for us that joy is a fruit of the Spirit?

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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, 1 Peter 1v8

Inexpressible and glorious joy. Wordsworth and C.S.Lewis both talked about being 'surprised by joy'. What Lewis at least meant by this was that after he had become a Christian all of a sudden at the most unexpected moment joy would flood his life. When everything is dark and gloomy and life is doing it's best to dump depression on you. Suddenly there is a joy. It shouldn't be there, there is no reason for it, it is just there. Smiling at the darkness. Filling your life. Joy against the odds, unexpected joy, overwhelming joy. Joy burning your heart and warming your soul, irrational, illogical, wonderful joy. Overjoyed.

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Have you ever experienced this? What was it like?

How do you make this happen?

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I don't think that you can make this happen, it is a God thing. I think that you can let it happen, it seems to come in moments when you fix your eyes on God and think about him, when you let him commune with you. At moments when you confirm within your mind your faith. "Jesus I believe in you and I trust you, I give my life to you." Next time when all is dark let that joy fill your life and set you free.

What would you say to a joyless Christian?

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What has happened to all your joy? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. Galatians 4v15

What caused the Galatians to loose their joy?

What might cause you to loose your joy?

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For the Galatians it was legalism, they got told that they had to work for their salvation and keep the law. Legalism still creates joyless Christians. (What is legalism?) But for us there are many things that take our joy. We must watch out for them and guard against them.

John 10 tells us that Satan is a thief and a robber, joy is high on his list of things to steal. If he can take your joy he can take the shirt off your back. Joy gives perspective and purpose, it also gives energy and motivation. Joy sees you through difficulties and trials. Joy gives us hope and an expectation for the future.

What happens when you loose your joy? How do you get it back?

A joyless Christian is in a dangerous place.

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Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Psalm 51v12

Why did David need his joy restoring?

So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. John 16v22

What stops me from experiencing joy?

8

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. John 15v11

What did Jesus tell His disciples? What brings you joy?

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. Isaiah 12v3, Isaiah 51v11, Isaiah 61v3

9

I have spoken to you with great frankness; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds. 2 Corinthians 7v4, 2 Corinthians 8v2

Was Paul's joy based on his situation and current experiences?

What was the basis of his joy?

Can you really have joy and troubles at the same time?

How?

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, James 1v2

What does it mean consider it pure joy?

Why would you consider trial an occasion for joy?

Does this imply you have a choice?

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Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrew 12v2

What was the joy set before Jesus? What is the joy set before us?

Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people. Philemon v7

Can you be the source of other peoples joy? How?

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To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy-- Jude v24

Bible Study

Ten Verses about Joy.



You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. Psalm 16v11

According to this verse, where does joy come from? What does this tell us about God?



Most people seem to think God is a kill joy. Always banning us from the things that are fun. Satan on the other had is the fun guy.

Why do you think this is? Is it true?

Do you think there is anything about the way we do Christianity that would give this impression?



C S Lewis suggested that it is only God who can create pleasure, all the enemy can do is try and make us misuse what God has created, but Jesus said; I have come that you might have life and have it to the full. God demonstrates that at heart He is a hedonist.

Do you think Satan wants us to be happy?

Perhaps the better question is; what does Satan want to achieve from happiness? Is it anything good? For Satan pleasure can be used to hook us into the wrong things, (all temptation has an aspect of pleasure in it.) It can also be used to distract us from what is important. God on the other has joy as our ultimate destiny, it is part of His purpose in creation. God made us and has a vested interest in our wellbeing.

Splendour and majesty are before him; strength and joy are in his dwelling place. 1 Chronicles 16:27



Some Basics.

What is joy? What is the difference between joy, happiness and fun?

Fun is generally sensory, it is the product of things that you do. As a result it tends to be short lived. As in "that was fun, lets do it again." Happiness and joy work on a deeper level. Happiness is a state of contentment, being satisfied with your life. It tends to be the result of your surroundings. Joy is often described as ongoing happiness. "The passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good; pleasurable feelings or emotions caused by success, good fortune, and the like, or by a rational prospect of possessing what we love or desire; gladness; exhilaration of spirits; delight." But from a biblical perspective it is more, because it does not come from the events in our lives but as a gift from God. Something that is placed in our lives or something that God enables to happen in us.



What would you say is the opposite of joy?

How does joy show itself in your life? (How will people know you have joy in your life?)

How are you going to recognise a lack of joy in someone? What are the symptoms?

Surely you have granted him unending blessings and made him glad with the joy of your presence. Psalm 21v6

According to this verse where does joy come from?

What sort of blessings are these?



Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Psalm 100:1

In the Bible joy is associated with rejoicing. What is the connection?

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5v18

Rejoicing changes your attitude, it enables you to see things positively and lets joy happen in you.

If this is true, what should we do?



For you make me glad by your deeds, LORD; I sing for joy at what your hands have done. Psalm 92v4

In the First Testament joy is often associated with the things God does for his people like victory in war, at harvest time or at the feasts. Eg Deuteronomy 16v15, Psalm 27v6

How does this relate to us?

What is the connection between joy and being grateful?



Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." Nehemiah 8v10

What on earth does it mean the "Joy of the LORD is your strength"?

What could it mean?

What is the effect of no joy in your life?

How does joy effect the way we serve God?



Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them. Psalm 126v5-6

What does this verse tell us?



This is a bit of a problem because it separates short term and long term. Many of us make happiness the goal of our lives. Happiness is also a temporary thing compared with eternity. If happiness is the goal it tends to justify behaviour that might not be right before God. Which is better to be miserable and right with God, than happy and wrong with Him? Better to be miserable and go to heaven than be happy and end up in hell. It is not an either or situation, being right with God does bring happiness but it is not the most important thing. What is more, people who make happiness the goal of their life never seem to achieve it, it is always out of their grasp. Those who set their heart to pursue God and His righteousness, seem to find happiness as a side effect.

Does this mean that we should not try to enjoy ourselves? What does it mean?



The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hopes of the wicked come to nothing. Proverbs 10v28

So I commend the enjoyment of life, because there is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany them in their toil all the days of the life God has given them under the sun. Ecclesiastes 8v15