

What Is Joy?

The dictionary defines joy as delight, gaiety, or happiness. The Bible kind of JOY, however, is quite different than happiness. Happiness is an emotion and is based on circumstances in one's life. The JOY that God gives to the Believer in Jesus is a supernatural quality that does not depend on circumstances or emotions, and can even be experienced in the WORST of outward circumstances. This kind of JOY comes directly from God Himself.

1. Joy is a FRUIT that grows naturally from a person who is in love with Jesus. Galatians 5:22-23 lists JOY as part of the Fruit of the Holy Spirit, and Jesus says that if we abide in Him, we produce this fruit.

- **Galatians 5:22-23** "But the **FRUIT of the Spirit** is love, **JOY**, peace, longsuffering (**PATIENCE**), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."
- **John 15:4-5 & 11** "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear **FRUIT** of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. **He who ABIDES in Me**, and I in him, **bears much FRUIT**; for without Me you can do nothing. These things I have spoken to you, that **My JOY may remain in you**, and that **your JOY may be full.**"

We see from the words of Jesus Himself that **this FRUIT, of which JOY is a part**, comes from **ABIDING in Jesus**. To **ABIDE in Jesus means to remain in a close relationship and CONSTANT FELLOWSHIP with Jesus**. Jesus Christ comes to live in our hearts when we receive Him by faith. He comes to dwell in us by His Spirit - the Holy Spirit. We have fellowship with Him through prayer (just talking to Him) and reading His word (He talks to us).

- **Ephesians 3:17-19** "That **Christ may dwell in your hearts** through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — **to know the love of Christ** which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."
- **John 3:24** "Now he who keeps His commandments **abides in Him, and He in him**. And by this we know that **He abides in us, by the Spirit** whom He has given us."
- **John 14:16-17** "And I will pray (ask) the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may **ABIDE** with you forever, even **the Spirit of truth** (Holy Spirit), whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for **He dwells with you, and will be in you.**"
- **Romans 8:9** "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed **the Spirit of God dwells in you**. Now if anyone does not have **the Spirit of Christ**, he is not His."

Definition: "SPIRIT OF CHRIST" — This is another name for the Holy Spirit, along with "Spirit of God," "Spirit of Truth," "Spirit of the Lord" and "Helper." Notice how the Holy Spirit is called both the "Spirit of **God**" and the "Spirit of **Christ**." These names are used interchangeably, which is just one of many ways that **the Bible teaches there is ONE GOD**, who exists in **THREE PERSONS**: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit.

- **1 Corinthians 3:17** "Now **the Lord is the Spirit**; and where **the Spirit of the Lord** is, there is liberty."

Definition: "HE IS NOT HIS" — Romans 8:9 tells us that there is no such thing as a Christian who does not have the Holy Spirit living (dwelling) inside of him. **You CANNOT BE a Christian, you CANNOT BE SAVED, and NOT have the Holy Spirit IN YOU**. However, there are various stages of **BEING FILLED with the Spirit**,

or **CONTROLLED BY** the Spirit, and that is dependent on HOW MUCH OF YOU has been **yielded and surrendered to the Holy Spirit**. When you are TRULY SURRENDERED to the Holy Spirit, and are **ALLOWING Him to be in CONTROL of your life**, you will have the **EVIDENCE of the FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT** (Galatians 5:22-23).

• **John 4:13 & 15** "By this we know that **we ABIDE in Him, and He in us**, because He has given us of **His Spirit**. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, **God ABIDES in him, and he in God.** "

2. We are commanded to REJOICE or be JOYFUL. By an ACT of your WILL, you must ALLOW the Holy Spirit to control you, and **you must ALLOW His JOY to fill your heart**. That means you must adjust your thinking, and not LET fear and negative thoughts control you.

• **Philippians 4:4** "**REJOICE in the Lord ALWAYS.** Again I will say, REJOICE!"

• **Psalms 37:4-5** "**DELIGHT yourself also in the Lord**, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way (LIFE) to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass (make it happen)."

• **Psalms 40:16** "**LET all those who seek You REJOICE and be GLAD in You**; let such as love Your salvation say continually, 'The Lord be magnified!'"

• **Psalms 5:11-12** "But **LET all those REJOICE** who put their trust in You; **let them** ever shout for **JOY**, because You defend them; **let those also who love Your name be JOYFUL in You.**"

• **Ephesians 5:17-20** "Therefore do not be UNWISE, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be **drunk with wine**, in which is dissipation; but **BE FILLED with the Spirit**, speaking to one another psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **SINGING and making melody in your HEART** to the Lord. **Giving thanks ALWAYS** for ALL THINGS to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,"

• **Colossians 3:16-17** "**Let the WORD of Christ dwell in you richly** in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another **in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, SINGING with grace in your HEARTS** to the Lord."

• **Jeremiah 15:16** "Thy words were found and I ate them, and **Thy WORDS became for me a JOY and the DELIGHT of my heart**; for I have been called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts."

Definition: "**Be Filled with the Spirit**" — We are COMMANDED to be FILLED with the Holy Spirit. Paul contrasts BEING DRUNK with BEING FILLED with the Spirit. INSTEAD of being drunk, which is to be "UNDER THE INFLUENCE" of alcohol, we are to be "UNDER THE INFLUENCE", or CONTROLLED BY the **Holy Spirit**. In other scriptures, it is also called "walking in the Spirit", "letting **the word of Christ** dwell in you", and "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ." This is NOT a ONE-TIME experience, but a continuous, moment-by-moment YIELDING of ourselves to the Holy Spirit's control in our lives. The literal translation of the Greek is "**KEEP being filled**" with the Spirit. One of the results of being CONTROLLED by the Holy Spirit is to have **JOY in your heart** ("singing and making melody in your HEART"). **JOY is closely linked to praising God** and thanking Him in all situations.

• **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** "**REJOICE ALWAYS**, pray without ceasing, **in everything give thanks**; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

• **Acts 16:24-25** "Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight Paul and Silas were **praying and SINGING HYMNS to God**, and the [other] prisoners were listening to them."

• **Psalms 34:1** "I will bless the Lord **at ALL TIMES** ; His PRAISE shall CONTINUALLY be in my mouth."

NOTE: "Giving thanks ALWAYS for ALL THINGS" — This is a matter of TRUST. If you do not TRUST God to be WORKING ALL THINGS together for your GOOD (Romans 8:28), then you WON'T BE ABLE to give Him thanks for EVERYTHING that is happening or has happened in your life. God LOVES YOU, and He promises to be with you in whatever trials or difficult situations may come up in your life.

- Romans 8:28** "And we know that **ALL things WORK together for GOOD** to those who **LOVE GOD**, to those who are the **CALLED according to His PURPOSE.**"
- John 16:33** "These things I have spoken to you, that **in Me** you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but **BE of good CHEER (be JOYFUL)**, I have overcome the world."

3. Our Joy comes from what God HAS done for us and WILL do for us, therefore we can be joyful in all kinds of circumstances (see also II Corinthians 6:4-10; II Corinthians 7:4-9; II Corinthians 8:1-2).

- Romans 15:13** "Now may the God of hope **fill you with all JOY** and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."
- Romans 8:38-39** "For I am persuaded that neither **death nor life**, nor **angels nor principalities**, nor powers, nor **things present nor things to come**, nor **height nor depth**, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the **LOVE of GOD which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**"
- Nehemiah 8:10** ".....for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the **JOY of the LORD is your STRENGTH.**"
- Isaiah 51:11** "So the redeemed (ransomed from SIN) of the Lord will return, and come with **JOYFUL** shouting to Zion (the heavenly city); and **everlasting JOY** will be on their heads. **They will obtain GLADNESS and JOY**, and sorrow and sighing will flee away."
- Read Revelation 21:1-8** "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Verses 4-5) "And **God will wipe away every tear from their eyes**; there shall be NO more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be NO more pain, for the former things have passed away. Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make ALL things new.' And He said to me, 'Write, for these words are TRUE and faithful.'"
- Read John 10:27-30** "My Sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and **they shall never perish**; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and **NO ONE** is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."

Definition: "SEPARATE us from the LOVE of GOD" — Our position is "in Christ, seated with Him in heavenly places" — God placed us there, and **we did NOT do anything to earn** that position. God CALLED us, CHOSE us, and PREDESTINED us **APART from any goodness or works of our own**, so He is able also to KEEP US FROM FALLING, He is able to PRESERVE US and prevent ANY PERSON OR THING from separating us from Himself. **It is NOT WE OURSELVES WHO HOLD ONTO GOD**, but **GOD who HOLDS ONTO US. NOTHING can separate us from God** and His love if we are His child through faith in Jesus Christ. God has made a **PROMISE that He will complete His work in our lives.**

- Ephesians 2:4-7** "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has **made us alive together with Christ** (by grace are you saved), and has raised us up together, and has **made us to sit together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus**, that in the ages to

come, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in **His KINDNESS towards US** in Christ Jesus."

•**Philippians 1:4-6** "Always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with **JOY**, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that **He who has begun a good work in you will complete it** until the day of Jesus Christ."

•**1 Thessalonians 5:23** "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you (make you holy) completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

To sum it all up, **the JOY that the Spirit of the Lord gives** is a gladness and peace welling up from within, but not from our own SELVES, but from His Spirit who has come to dwell in us.

•**John 4:13-14** "Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him **a well of water springing up into everlasting life.**"

•**John 7:37-39** "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and DRINK. **He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his HEART will flow rivers of LIVING WATER.**' But this He spoke concerning **the SPIRIT, whom those believing in Him would receive**; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Definition: "JESUS was not yet GLORIFIED" — Jesus was speaking about His death and resurrection, which at this point, was yet in the future. **On the Day of Pentecost, AFTER** Jesus was "glorified" by His resurrection and ascension to heaven, the Holy Spirit was GIVEN (and still is given) to ALL WHO BELIEVE in Him and RECEIVE Him by faith.

•**Jude 24-25** "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless (without blame) before **the presence of His glory with EXCEEDING JOY**, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."