

**What should you do when you feel miserable?**

Weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. Psalm 30:5
Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him. Psalm 126:5-6



Two of the signs of mental health are; the ability to show appropriate emotion Romans 12:15; and expressing spontaneous joy. Jesus showed such out bursts of Joy, Matthew 11:25.

Is the Christian walk supposed to be miserably?**Joy and Strength**

This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." Nehemiah 8:10
Sing for joy to God our strength; shout aloud to the God of Jacob! Psalms 81:1
A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit. Proverbs 15:13

**Joy and Satisfaction**

So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him under the sun. Ecclesiastes 8:15
Be happy, young man, while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment. Ecclesiastes 11:9

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. Philippians 4:12

**How is contentment associated with joy?****What was Paul's joy not based on?****What do you think the secret of being content is?**

Paul learned the secret of being content in all circumstances. Hebrews tells us to be content with what we have. This is one of the secrets of happiness.

Joy is the second fruit of the Spirit, often we emphasis love and peace as more important. If joy is a fruit of the Spirit, it means first of all that it is something that God grows in us. We need to let this happen.

What difference will it make if we have joy in our lives?**Who needs to be a recipient of joy?****Some things to pray:**

Lord bring joy into my life.
 Lord show me the things in my life I should take joy in.
 Lord show me the things that block my joy.
 Ask God to unleash joy in your life.



But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23

Joy is the second fruit of the Spirit.

**What is Joy?****Compare****What is fun?****What is happiness?**

Fun tends to be sensory. It comes from the things we do. It is based on something that we find pleasurable or stimulating. It also tends to be short lived.

Happiness is a state of mind based on a set of circumstances. It has to do with being content. A good marriage, secure finances or a job you enjoy are sources of happiness. Happiness is based on happenings. If your rugby team wins you experience happiness. Joy is intended to be a deep rooted thing in our lives. It is not supposed to fluctuate on an hourly basis. It is intended to be on strength that enables us to deal with the difficulties of life, not something that shrinks as problems grow and grows when problems are absent.

**What gives you Joy?**

Good relationships, freedom in all it's forms, being loved.

**Joy is a gift from God:**

You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound.

Psalm 4:7

You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,

Psalm 30:11

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 1:8

**This gift is found in our salvation**

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. Isaiah 12:3

Restore to me the joy of your salvation. Psalm 51:12

Joy, in scripture is often associated with worshipping God, this should bring joy and be a joy. Most of the references to joy in the Bible fall into five categories.



Festival

Deuteronomy 16:15
2 Chronicles 30:26
Ezra 6:22
Nehemiah 8:12&17
Esther 8:17
Psalm 27:6

How are festivals associated with joy?



Presence

Leviticus 9:24
1 Chronicles 16:27
1 Chronicles 29:22
Psalm 16:11
Psalm 21:6
1 Thessalonians 3:9

How is the presence of God associated with joy?



Obedience

Psalm 19:8
Psalm 119:111
Proverbs 10:28
John 15:10-11

How does obedience bring joy?



Holy Spirit

Luke 10:21
Acts 13:52
Romans 14:17
Galatians 5:22
1 Thessalonians 1:6

How is joy linked to the Holy Spirit?



Trust

Psalm 28:7
Psalm 21:1
Psalm 126:3
Romans 15:13

How does trust bring Joy?



What is Christian joy rooted in?

It is probably safe to say that the Christian understanding of joy is different from a secular one. Joy comes as a product of a good relationship with God. It comes from the things that God does in our lives and it comes from being able to trust Him with our pasts, presents and futures.

It is the knowledge that God is in control and can be trusted that enables us to experience joy.



What if there is no joy?

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 4:15

Where there is no joy then one of the above elements is probably missing. In the case of the Galatians they had departed from obeying God. They had also become legalistic and 'religious'.



What would you say to someone who complained they had no joy in their life?

What wouldn't you say?



Does everyone have the right to be happy?

If we are disobeying God, are we likely to have joy in our lives?

If we don't believe God's promises, are we likely to have joy in our lives?

If we do not believe what God has said about us, are we likely to have joy?

Often we are miserable because we believe the enemies lies instead of God's truth.

How much of our level of joy is associated to our attitude toward life and God?

Is God's joy automatic?

Is joy a choice? Is joy an emotion or a state of being?



What things are likely to take away your joy?

Pressure, stress, fear, anxiety, grief, unfulfilled expectation, anger, problems, loneliness, bad relationships. Etc.



Is a positive attitude associated with joy?

Does this mean pessimists are excluded from joy?

If you focus on all of the problems around you, are you likely to know joy?



Should joy be the goal of your life?

What should be the goal of your life?

Joy is a strange thing. If you make it the goal of your life then the quest for joy is likely to take you to bad places. Making joy (or happiness) a goal is counterproductive, the more you strive for it the less likely you are to find it. Joy comes a the by-product of a well done relationship with God.



Then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob." The mouth of the LORD has spoken. Isaiah 58:14

Where is Joy found? Is the word 'find' significant?



Can circumstances rob us of our joy?

I have great confidence in you; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds. 2 Corinthians 7:4

Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 2 Corinthians 8:2



How could Paul still have joy in the face of all kinds of trouble?

Why do you think the enemy is so keen to rob us of our joy?

What is likely to happen if the enemy succeeds in taking our joy?

How should Christians express their joy?

Does everyone show joy the same way?

What things are going to increase your joy?

Is it wrong for a Christian to be miserable?