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## Bible Study on Joy: 7 Things You Need To Know

by [Robert Driskell](#) · [Print](#) · [Email](#)

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The word 'joy' is defined by [Merriam-Webster](#) as, "the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires...the expression or exhibition of such emotion...a state of happiness". Let us look at the biblical understanding of 'joy'.

### Worldly Joy Is Fickle And Temporary

The joy that the world offers is a pale imitation of the true joy only God can give us. The joy that unsaved people experience is a temporary joy that comes and goes depending on the situation that person is in at the time. If things are going well, there is joy. When things are difficult, there is no joy. In the [book of Job](#), one of Job's friends utters some insightful words: "...the exulting of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless but for a moment?" (Job 20:5 ESV cf. 20:18). There can be no true joy apart from God.

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Wherever people know, love, and worship God, His love instills a joy, that only He can give, into the hearts of His worshipers

## In The Old Testament, Joy Was Associated With The True Worship Of God

Joy is a prominent feature of the true worship of God in the Old Testament. Wherever people know, love, and worship God, [His love](#) instills a joy, that only He can give, into the hearts of His worshipers (I Chronicles 15:16; Ezra 3:12, 6:16; Psalm 16:11, 32:11, 51:12 and many more).

In the times of King Hezekiah, the Israelites rededicated themselves to God and we read, *“So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem”* (II Chronicles 30:26 ESV). The people’s renewed commitment to God reignited the joy in their hearts that only He can produce. Believers today can experience this same joy when he or she is dedicated to Jesus.



## Joy Is A Gift From God

Joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, who resides in the heart of the believer, *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness...”* (Galatians 5:22 ESV). Since God is the author of all these good things, when one becomes a Christian, and is united to God through faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit imparts these qualities to the believer. Joy is also an integral part of the Kingdom of God and will exist wherever believers are present, *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”* (Romans 14:17 ESV).

## Doing God’s Will Increases Our Joy

As many Christians can attest, being involved in the spread of the Gospel brings joy to the believer’s heart. Personally, when I see someone become a [follower of Jesus](#) or I know that someone has discovered a truth from God’s Word that will encourage him or her in their walk of faith, I cannot help but feel a sense of joy. The apostle Paul also experienced this often in his ministry (II Corinthians 1:24, 2:3; Philippians 1:4, 2:2; I Thessalonians 2:19, 20, 3:9; II Timothy 1:4; Philemon 1:7; and many other passages). The writer of Third John experienced the joy of ministry, *“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth”* (3 John 1:4 ESV).

## Circumstances Cannot Take Away Our Joy

In Second Corinthians 6:10, Paul says that Christians can even be *“sorrowful, yet always rejoicing”* (ESV). This means that even when we are in the midst of a situation that legitimately brings us sorrow, our inner joy is never taken away. The very core of our being can still rejoice in the fact that we are forgiven children of God who enjoy an intimate relationship with the Creator of the universe. Our joy is strengthened when we remember that, no matter what the circumstances, God is with us and He is above all.

### We see this in the writings of several New Testament authors:

James says that we should, *“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness”* (James 1:2-3 ESV).

Again, we read of the inspired determination of the apostle Paul as he faced incredible hardships, *“Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me”* (Philippians 2:17-18 ESV).

The apostle Peter encourages us with, *“...rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed”* (I Peter 4:13 ESV).

## The Only Thing That Can Steal Our Joy Is Sin

Godly joy is a wonderful thing; it is a supernatural gift from God to every believer. However, one warning must be issued. [Sin](#) can steal our joy. It is difficult to experience the joy of our relationship with God when we have done something that damages that relationship. Joy is a gift of the Holy Spirit; when we grieve the Holy Spirit by our sin, we interfere with the flow of joy (among other things) from God. If we find that we are experiencing joy less and less, we may need to reevaluate our relationship with Jesus Christ to make sure we are living as we should.

## Christians Should ‘Rejoice Always’

Merriam-Webster [defines ‘rejoice’](#) in this way, ‘to feel joy or great delight’. There are several passages in the New Testament where Paul instructs us to ‘rejoice’. These passages carry a sense of urgency or command, as if Paul were saying that a Christian is to be full of joy and he is urging believers to make sure that their relationships with God and others are relationships that produce joy (Philippians 3:1, 4:4).

Paul writes in First Thessalonians 5:16-18, *“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you”* (ESV). This joy, prayer, and thanksgiving should characterize the life of the Christian. It is God’s will for the believer (see v. 18); this is how God wants us to live. *“Rejoicing always”* does not mean that we are to paste a fake smile on our faces no matter what is going on in our lives or the lives of those we love. It means that we are to remain steadfast in our knowledge that God is our strength and comfort, no matter what circumstances we find ourselves. If our relationship with Jesus is right, and we confess and repent of any sin of which we are aware, we will experience this supernatural joy at all times...whether those times be good or bad.

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The Holy Bible, English Standard Version

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[Robert Driskell](#) received a Bachelor of Arts degree in both Pastoral Ministries and Biblical Studies from Mid-America Christian University in 1995. He is convinced that the hope of the world lies in men and women having a saving relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. Robert believes that the Bible contains the truth that God wants us to base our lives upon. He is passionate about understanding the Bible and helping others do the same. Only when one views life through the lens of the Bible can one arrive at a worldview based on truth. Robert is happily married and lives in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Robert has written 111 articles on What Christians Want To Know! Read them in the archive below.

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