

Joy

- I. Definitions.
 - A. **joy**: A vivid emotion of pleasure arising from a sense of well-being or satisfaction; the feeling or state of being highly pleased or delighted; exultation of spirit; gladness, delight.
 - B. **rejoice**: *trans.* To enjoy by possessing; to have full possession and use of (a thing). *Obs.*
 2. To gladden, make joyful, exhilarate (a person, his spirits, etc.).
- II. Rejoicing is not optional. It is a command of God. **PHIL 3:1**.
 - A. It is not a momentary requirement. **PHIL 4:4; 1TH 5:16**.
 - B. It should not be quenched because of trouble. **2CO 6:10; JAM 1:2**.
 - C. It is a cardinal trait of Christ's kingdom. **ROM 14:17**.
 - D. It is an evidence of grace. **GAL 5:22**.
- III. Not all rejoicing satisfies God's expectations. **PRO 15:21; ACT 7:41; JAM 4:16**.
 - A. Indiscriminate joy is unhealthy. Babylon "happied" itself into oblivion. **ISA 47:8-9**.
 - B. The doctrine of *hedonism* (pleasure is the chief good) is joy taken too far. It is death masquerading as a good time. **2TI 3:4; 1TI 5:6**.
 - C. Godly rejoicing is, as Paul said, "Rejoice in the Lord..." (**PHIL 4:4**). **ISA 61:10**.
 - D. We should rejoice in our God, His attributes, His works, His judgments, His salvation and His precepts.
 1. There is a peace of God which transcends any peace of this world. **JOH 14:1, 27 c/w PHIL 4:7**.
 2. There is likewise a more excellent joy. **PSA 4:7**.
 3. Faith alone can fill us with these. **ROM 15:13**.
 4. Unmanaged joy can outrun faith. **LUK 24:41; ACT 12:12-14**.
- IV. Fighting the good fight of faith requires strength. **EPH 6:10**.
 - A. Where the joy of the Lord is absent, so is strength. **NEH 8:10**.
 - B. Happiness is medicinal to the spirit and body. **PRO 15:13, 15; 17:22**.
 - C. A joyless heart can become numb to positive influences. **PRO 25:20; EXO 6:9; JOB 9:16**.
 - D. True joy cannot be taken from you. It can only be lost by surrendering it. **JOH 16:22**.
 1. One way of losing joy is through lethargy--when Christ and His service become familiar, unspectacular, or boring and personal interests take precedence.
 - a. This is called *losing the first love*. **REV 2:4 c/w MAR 4:18-19**.
 - b. Mark that zeal is no less optional than joy. **TIT 2:14; REV 3:19**.
 2. Another way that the joy of the Lord is frustrated is through a guilt-ridden conscience because of sin. **PSA 38:3-6, 10; JOH 15:10-11**.
 - a. The conscience may be laboring under the false notion that eternity depends on oneself rather than God and His grace. **GAL 5:1-4**.
 - b. The conscience may otherwise be burdened with guilt over something that is not even unlawful in God's sight. **COL 2:20-23**.
 - c. How important righteousness and truth are to our emotional well-being!
 3. Joy may also be reduced through troubles and pressures. But these things need not overcome us. **1SAM 30:6; PSA 27:10-14; ISA 40:31**.
 - a. Joy may be had in the midst of afflictions. **2CO 8:2; 1TH 1:6**.
 - b. Joy should be had in persecutions. **LUK 6:22-23; ACT 5:41**.
 - c. Tribulation perfects us. **ROM 5:3-5**.

- d. If we lose all in this world, yet have we Christ. **HAB 3:17-18.**
 - e. It helps when we keep things in perspective and identify with Christ. **HEB 12:2; 1PE 4:12-13.**
- V. Is your strength low? Check your level of true joy.
- A. While you're at it, check your faith. How much do you really believe the *glad tidings* or *gospel*? **ROM 15:13; 1PE 1:8.**
 - B. Does **ROM 8:1** thrill your heart?
 - C. Is God's election and discrimination sweet to you? **LUK 10:20-21.**
 - D. Is your attitude towards the Bible correct? **PSA 119:162; JER 15:16.**
 - E. Does finding God's truth and kingdom mean much to you? **MAT 13:44; ACT 8:39.**
 - F. Does the assembly of saints quicken your spirit? **PSA 122:1; 137:6.**
 - G. Do you do any witnessing or defending of the faith? **1PE 3:15 c/w PRO 15:23.**
- VI. When church members walk in Christ's light, rejoicing always in Christ, they also increase the minister's joy. **3JO 1:4; PHIL 2:14-16.**
- VII. An acronym to live by: JOY = Jesus first, Others second, Yourself last.
- A. This is the Law and the Prophets. **MAT 22:37-40.**
 - B. This is charity, the only everlasting virtue. **1CO 13:4-13.**
 - C. An undue focus on self is the source of much dissatisfaction since self can never be satisfied. **ECC 1:8; 2:10-11; 5:10-11.**
 - D. True joy does not depend on getting what you desire but rather giving God what He desires. This is what satisfies. **2TI 4:7.**
- VIII. In spite of our flaws, God joys over us with singing (**ZEP 3:17**). That of itself is something to rejoice about.
- IX. (**PSA 16:11**) Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.