

# Finding Joy



## Getting Started

What gives you joy? Do you often feel joyful?

Many people think joy is a reaction or response to something. They think we feel joyful when something good happens. But with Christ in your life, it is possible to have joy no matter what is happening. Joy can be an ongoing emotion, something we have in good times and bad. The Bible tells us to, “rejoice in the Lord always.” (Philippians 4:4) This doesn’t mean we should not feel sad when painful things happen. But even when we feel pain, we can still rejoice in God’s great love for us, knowing that God is working in us, and making us stronger, better people.

## Improving Your Vocabulary

**produce (v)** - to make or create something

**humility (n)** - not arrogant or proud

**duty (n)** - a job or responsibility

**honor (n)** - respect, esteem, praise

**union (n)** - a result of bringing or joining together people or things

## Reading God's Word

### John 15:9-11

*Jesus teaches his disciples about living close to him.*

**9** I love you just as the Father loves me; remain in my love. **10** If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. **11** I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

### Galatians 5:22-23

**22** But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** humility, and self-control.

*Paul wrote the following passages in Philippians while he was in prison.*

### Philippians 1:18-21

**18** And I will continue to be happy, **19** because I know that by means of your prayers and the help which comes from the Spirit of Jesus Christ, I shall be set free. **20** My deep desire and hope is that I shall never fail in my duty, but that at all times, and especially right now, I shall be full of courage, so that with my whole being I shall bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die. **21** For what is life? To me, it is Christ. Death, then, will bring more.

## Philippians 4:4-7

**4** May you always be joyful in your union with the Lord. I say it again: rejoice! **5** Show a gentle attitude toward everyone. The Lord is coming soon. **6** Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. **7** And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.

For further study, see Psalm 16:11; Habakkuk 3:17-19; Philippians 4:12-13 and James 1:2-9.

### Taking a Closer Look

1. How can we remain in Jesus' love? What will this give us? (John 15:9-11)

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2. If we have the Spirit of God in our lives, what qualities will grow in us?  
(Galatians 5:22-23)

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3. What is Paul's deep desire and hope? (Philippians 1:20)

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4. What is the most important thing to Paul? (Philippians 1:21) How do you think this might make it easier for him to have joy, even though he is in prison?

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5. Why don't we have to worry about anything? How should we ask God for things? (Philippians 4:6)

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6. Have you ever experienced the "peace which is far beyond human understanding"? Describe the situation. (Philippians 4:7)

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7. Do you think you can build joy in your life, the way Paul did? How?

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## Taking Action

If you want to have more joy in your life, here are some ways to help you increase it.

1. Remember to thank God for what he has given you. Even in terrible situations, there are always blessings to thank him for. Focusing on what you have, instead of what you don't have, will help bring you joy.
2. Remember that God has a plan to use every painful experience you go through. Paul knew that God was using his pain in prison to encourage other people. You can find joy in knowing that God will use your pain to make you a stronger, more caring person. (James 1:2-9)
3. Review the promises God makes to us in the Bible. We know these promises will come true, and this brings joy.
  - God will never leave us. (Hebrews 13:5)
  - He hears our prayers. (Psalm 116:1-2)
  - He will provide for our needs. (Matthew 6:33)

## Memory Verse: Psalm 16:11

**You will show me the path that leads to life; your presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure forever.**

## Review the Vocabulary

*Discuss your answers to the following questions with a classmate.*

1. What are some of your **duties**?
2. Do you think **humility** is a good quality to have?
3. Who in your life do you **honor**?
4. What **produces** good fruit in our lives?
5. What is one example of a kind of **union** between people?



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