

***The Joy of the Lord***  
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**Introduction:** We want to know the beginning stages of a tragic disease.

- A. In the physical world we may begin to lose a natural function of our body as a warning something is wrong. (Such as a loss of appetite and strength.)
  - 1. When the symptom appears we begin to look for the cause in the body.
  - 2. This is also true in the spiritual realm also.
- B. A healthy heart will possess “the fruit of the Spirit.” (Gal 5:22-23)
  - 1. Please notice this is the “fruit” of the Spirit and not “fruits.”
  - 2. What is the cause of a loss of a spiritual appetite and strength. Consider what happens when “the joy of the Lord” is no longer found in our lives. (Neh 8:10)

***I. God’s joy is certain and constant***

- A. This joy is based upon our relationship to God. What is joy? (Jn 15:9-14)  
**Joy** - χαρά, ἄσ, ἦ (1) literally joy, as a feeling of inner happiness *rejoicing, gladness, delight* (MT 2.10); (2) by metonymy; (a) the person or thing that is the cause or object of joy or happiness (LU 2.10; PH 4.1); (b) a state or condition of happiness or blessedness (MT 25.21; HE 12.2)
  - 1. Joy is often found in serving and blessing others. The joy of the cross involved Jesus looking ahead to our restored relationship with Him! (Heb 12:3)
  - 2. Joy is a natural by-product of the receiving God’s love. (Rom 8:38-39)
- B. God’s joy comes through pain and will never be taken away. (Jn 16:19-24)
  - 1. The apostles went through pain like childbirth until they finally understood the nature of their relationship with God. *Do you and I really understand it?*
  - 2. As we establish a daily relationship with in in worship, thanksgiving and prayer our very lives become defined by joy! “That your joy may be full!”
  - 3. We have joy because we are not the victims of circumstance but always will have the victory over circumstances. (Rom 8:28)

“Happiness is caused by things that happen around me, and circumstances will mar it; but joy flows right on through trouble; joy flows on through the dark; joy flows in the night as well as in the day; joy flows all through persecution and opposition. It is an unceasing fountain bubbling up in the heart; a secret spring the world can’t see and doesn’t know anything about. The Lord gives his people perpetual joy when they walk in obedience to him.”

***II. What God’s joy will do for me***

- A. It will give me great strength to serve God in all circumstances.
  - 1. How was Jesus able to willingly go the cross? (Heb 12:3)  
“I cannot choose to be strong, but I can choose to be joyful. And when I am willing to do that, strength will follow.”
  - 2. Joy comes from understanding the promises of God and then making that our very purpose in living in that understanding. (Isa 29:18-19; 35:8-10)
  - 3. Notice how this joy came from an understanding of God’s word. *Is our personal Bible study this way?*
  - 4. This joy is not produced by artificial circumstances that are manipulated by men. Many use carnal productions to create a temporary emotion.
- B. It will help my health like medicine. (Prov 17:22; Jer 15:16)

1. In times of uncertainty can you meditate on the promises of God and find comfort? Please learn to read God's word to find an unending joy.
2. Imagine God making personal, direct promises to me. Imagine God knowing the hurts and burden of my heart and reaching out to help me! **(Mt 11:28-30)**
- C. It will allow me to glorify God.
  1. God will bring us to sorrow that leads to repentance and a restoration of our relationship with Him. **(Psa 30:5-8)**
  2. We always will have a heart overflowing with praise and a life that will glorify Him. **(Psa 30:11-12)**
  3. Jesus fulfilled this great prophecy about Him and His people. **(Isa 61:1-3)**

### **III. Things in my life that will produce joy**

#### **A. My present salvation. **(Lk 10:17, 20)****

1. This is a joy shared by heavenly beings. Heaven is described as joy! **(Mt 25:23)**
2. This salvation should always be new within our hearts. What will happen if we forget? **(2 Pt 1:9)**
3. Do you remember the joy that followed your baptism? **(Acts 8:39; Mk 16:16)**

#### **B. The daily work of God in my life. **(Psa 5:11-12; Heb 13:5-6)****

1. When I start my day with prayer it bring me an awareness of the presence and care of God. Have you and I been in the presence of God today?

"Joy is never in our power, and pleasure is. I doubt whether anyone who has tasted joy would ever, if both were in his power, exchange it for all the pleasure in the world." - C. S. Lewis

2. We must learn how to see the unseen God. **(Heb 11:27)**

#### **C. Great sacrifice and pain in serving Him. **(Jas 1:2-4)****

1. Do you have a "religion" that cost you nothing? Then you have no joy. **(2 Sam 24:24)**
2. In worldly things we can understand this. Who was your favorite teacher in school? (Ex. What does a championship team experience to win?)
3. Joy in your life will be a major reason others will open their hearts to you!

### **IV. Things that destroy joy in my life**

#### **A. When I fail to repent and confess my sin. **(Psa 51:8-12)****

1. The pain of repentance is great but it is followed by healing and joy.
2. Repentance is the doorway to joy! **(Psa 51:12; Rev 2:4-5)**

#### **B. When I try to please God by a system of works. **(Eph 2:8-9)****

1. Some think God's love is "performance based."
2. Is your confidence upon the things you do or the things that God does?

#### **C. When I focus on men and their approval. **(2 Cor 10:12, 17-18)****

#### **D. When I dwell on the negative. **(Phil 4:8-9)****

1. Some struggle greatly with this! In time you will be isolated from everyone.
2. Negative people will run and quit because people have hurt and disappointed them in the past. God wants to teach you how to think!

**Conclusion:** Have these tests found that joy in your life?