



JOY

1. There are degrees of joy:
 - a. "much joy" (Acts 8:8; Philemon 7),
 - b. "great joy" (Matt. 2:10; 28:8; Luke 24:52; Acts 15:3),
 - c. "abundance of joy" (2 Cor. 8:2),
 - d. "filled with joy" (Acts 13:52),
 - e. "fill you with all joy" (Rom. 15:13),
 - f. "be filled with joy" (2 Tim. 1:4),
 - g. "be made full" (John 3:29; 15:11; 16:24),
 - h. "make my joy full" (Phil. 2:2),
 - i. "joy inexpressible" (1 Peter 1:8),
 - j. "no greater joy than this" (3 John 4).
2. Joy usually comes from desirable events (the etymology of *chara*, the Greek word for joy, suggests favorable circumstances bring joy to people):
 - a. finding hidden treasure (Matt. 13:44),
 - b. birth of a baby (Luke 1:14; John 16:21),
 - c. miracles (reappearance of the star to the Magi) (Matt. 2:10),
 - d. hearing and receiving the gospel (Matt. 13:20=Mark 4:16=Luke 8:13),
 - e. hearing good news (an angel tells the women at the tomb Jesus is alive) (Matt. 28:8),
 - f. seeing Jesus alive (Luke 24:41),
 - g. exercising authority over demons (Luke 10:17),
 - h. successful exorcisms and healings (Acts 8:8),
 - i. receiving answers to prayers (John 16:24).
3. Joy co-exists with other emotions such as fear ("with fear and great joy," Matt. 28:8).
4. Joy is felt by
 - a. angels in heaven when a sinner repents and becomes righteous (Luke 15:7, 10).
 - b. the saints when they hear about people being saved (Acts 15:3).
5. Joy comes from
 - a. God the Father (Rom. 15:13).
 - b. hearing the Word of God (John 15:11; 1 Thess. 1:6; 1 John 1:4; 2 John 1:12).
 - c. knowing the promises of God (Heb. 10:34).
 - d. faith—from believing the promises of God (Rom. 15:13; 1 Peter 1:8; cf. Luke 1:45).
 - e. anticipating future rewards (1 Thess. 2:19–20; Heb. 10:34; 12:2). The joy that comes from anticipating future rewards helps us to endure suffering (Heb. 12:2).
 - f. unity and harmony in the local church (Phil. 2:2).
 - g. fellowship with other Christians (Rom. 15:32; 2 Cor. 2:3; 7:13; Phil. 2:29; 4:1; 2 Tim. 1:4).
 - h. submissive sheep in the local church (Heb. 13:17).
 - i. seeing your spiritual children loving one another and walking in the truth (Philemon 7; 3 John 4; cf. 1 John 1:4).
6. Joy is produced
 - a. by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22; 1 Thess. 1:6).
 - b. with the help of pastors and teachers ('we are co-workers of your joy' in 2 Cor. 1:24 means "we are working with you to bring you joy" BAG, 787–788; Phil. 1:25).
7. Joy accompanies the filling of the Spirit (Acts 13:52; Rom. 14:17).
8. You may be continually filled with joy (Acts 13:52). The imperfect tense of the verb *pleroo* describes a prolonged joy—a joy that endured over a period of time.
9. Joy may be present in times of testing and suffering (2 Cor. 7:4; 8:2; James 1:2), e.g., in the seizure of your property (Heb. 10:34).
10. Temporary joy comes and goes with changing circumstances; lasting joy rests firmly on unchanging circumstances.
 - a. Lasting joy is based on irreversible historical facts and immutable promises (John 16:22).
 - b. Lasting joy comes from placing your faith in biblical history and in God's unchanging promises. Unbelievers don't have this kind of joy because they don't have this kind of faith.
 - c. Lasting joy is a fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit produces this joy by teaching you about Bible history (e.g., Jesus' death, resurrection, and exaltation), God's character (truthfulness and immutability), and God's promises.
 - d. Lasting joy is always available because faith is always possible.
 - e. Lasting joy is beyond the reach of the world. The only way it can be taken from you is by a force stronger than God (which is impossible).
 - f. You can lose your joy, however, by losing your faith. Faith is the Achilles' heel of lasting joy. Satan sows seeds of doubt, attacking your faith, and, if successful, gets you to replace your joy with worry. Lasting joy is available anytime through faith and will last as long as your faith lasts.
 - g. No one can take lasting joy from you if you keep believing God's word and promises (John 16:22).
11. Joy often (Phil. 1:4; Col. 1:11–12; 1 Thess. 3:9) but not always (Luke 22:44; Heb. 5:7) accompanies prayer. Jesus, for instance, "being in agony...was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground" (Luke 22:44). At this time, says the author of Hebrews, "He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death" (Heb. 5:7). In view of this "always" does not modify "with joy" in Philippians 1:4.
12. Joy results in praising God (Luke 24:52).