

The Choice to Rejoice

What is the most common
#1 ambition in life?

To be HAPPY



It's a bad day when...



Questions to ask yourself...

- † It is easy to be happy when everything is going your way?
- † Are you happy only when everything is going your way?

If you answer yes, that means you are going to be UNHAPPY for much of your life

How can we stay positive...



- † Galatians 5:22 says "*The fruit of the Spirit is...joy*"
- † St. Paul reminds us in Philippians 4:4. "*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!*"

Happiness vs. Joy...

- † Happiness depends on happenings
- † It comes from the root word "hap", which means "luck" or "circumstance"

- † Joy is an attitude, a choice
- † Joy is an inside job and is not dependent on circumstances.
- † It is your choice to rejoice
- † Basic truth:
You can choose, regardless of the circumstances, to be joyful.

Happiness vs. Joy...(cont)

- † Joy is what make life enjoyable
- † When we learn to choose joy, we greatly enhance our lives.
- † We can be the most positive people in the world - why?

3 Reasons why we have Joy

1. We have HOPE

- The result of experiencing God is that “*we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God*”
- For a Christian, no situation is completely hopeless, Christians have hope
- A person can live 40 days without food, 3 days without water, 8 mins without air, but not one minute without hope.
- Many people base their hope in wrong things
- All this things are temporary & can be taken away, & when they disappear, so does hope

3 Reasons why we have Joy

1. We have HOPE (cont)

- Joy is impossible without hope
- We have a reason to be positive - we can rejoice because we rejoice in hope
- Romans 12:12 "*Be joyful in hope*" - hope in Christ
- The hope we have in Christ is the 1st reason we can rejoice, even in difficult situations.

3 Reasons why we have Joy

2. God Has A Purpose For Our Lives

- Romans 5:3 *“We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance.”*
- In Greek “**sufferings**” here means “**distress**” and it refers to anything that puts us under pressure.
- Common misconception: if we can get rid of problems, we will be happy

3 Reasons why we have Joy

2. God Has A Purpose For Our Lives

- Joy is learning to enjoy life in spite of problems
- Joy is not the absence of suffering, but the presence of God
- That's why Paul says we rejoice in suffering: **God is always with us.**
- Do not misunderstand this idea of rejoicing in suffering
- Avoid "martyr complex" - the more you suffer the more spiritual you are
- Suffering can produce good things in our life but Paul is not talking about masochism

3 Reasons why we have Joy

2. God Has A Purpose For Our Lives

- Paul is not saying that we enjoy suffering, he is saying we rejoice in it because we know that suffering has a purpose behind it
- Problems have a purpose - your trials & difficulties have value
- Sufferings produces the following:
 - ☺ **Perseverance** (Rom 5:3)
 - ☺ **Character** (Rom 5:4)
 - ☺ **Hope** (Rom 5:4)

3 Reasons why we have Joy

2. God Has A Purpose For Our Lives

- Understand that problems does not automatically produce perseverance, character & hope
- These are produced only when we choose the right attitude
- it is Joy!
- When we learn to rejoice in the problem - God uses it for good in our lives
- James 1: 2-4
- If you really wanted to understand joy, read the book of Philippians
 - ☺ Joy & rejoicing was mentioned 19x in this book
 - ☺ Paul wrote this book when he was in prison

3 Reasons why we have Joy

3. God is with Us

- Romans 5:11 *“We rejoice because of what God has done through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has now made us God’s friends”*
- God is always with those who believe in Him, no matter where we are or what we are facing.
- Isaiah 43:2 *“When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you. When you pass through fire, you will not be burned; the hard trials that come will not hurt you”*
- It is saying that God is with us & that nothing can overwhelm us - nothing can destroy you.

4 Exercises to Develop Inner Joy

- Attitude of Gratitude
- Cultivate Inner Joy by Giving
- Develop Inner Joy through Service
- Sharing Christ with others

The Choice to Rejoice

- † Joy is elusive because it runs counter to what our culture teaches us
- † Our culture says: "Live for yourself and forget about others"
- † But our Lord tells us that joy comes from developing an attitude of gratitude and giving of material possessions, our time, and our knowledge of the Good News.
- † We encourage you: **CHOOSE TO REJOICE**