



## Why Don't I Feel More Joyful?

### Introduction

In *Desiring God*, John Piper lays out some convictions that are foundational for experiencing joy:

1. The longing to be happy is a universal human experience, and it is good, not sinful.
2. We should never try to deny or resist our longing to be happy, as though it were a bad impulse. Instead, we should seek to intensify this longing and nourish it with whatever will provide the deepest and most enduring satisfaction.
3. The deepest and most enduring happiness is found only in God. Not from God, but in God.

Westminster Catechism: “What is the chief end of man? Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”

### 6 Clarifications About Joy

**1. Joy comes from the Holy Spirit.** (Gal 5:22; Eph 5:18)

**2. Joy resides in our spirit. It is not a *physical* feeling.**

Biblical joy has been defined as: A sense of gladness, a state of joyful happiness, an experience of well-being, a feeling of emotional delight, a sweet and pleasant affection, a good feeling in the soul.

- *Luke 1:47* - “my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”
- *Psalm 35:9* - “my soul shall rejoice in the LORD; It shall exult in His salvation.”

**3. Joy cannot be destroyed by our circumstances – unless we allow it.**

Worldly happiness is based on circumstances, biblical joy is available in the deepest trials. (Act 16:25; Mt 5:10; Jas 1:2-3)

**4. Rejoicing is always possible.**

How often are we supposed to rejoice? (Phil 4:4; 1Thes 5:16-18)

**5. Rejoicing is a choice.**

Rejoicing is a determined choice to praise God in every situation and circumstance. We can't make ourselves feel joy, but joy comes from the Holy Spirit as a result of the choices we make.

## 6. Rejoicing depends upon the quality of its object.

The experience of joy always depends upon an object. Joy has content and substance. The way the Spirit produces joy in our heart is by focusing our minds on the glorious truths of Scripture and applying them personally to our lives.

### The Objects of Joy

- Rejoice in the Lord (Phil 3:1, 4:4; Ps 32:11, 40:16)
- Rejoice in God's Love (Ps 31:7; Zeph 3:17)
- Rejoice in God's Goodness (2Chron 6:41; Jer 29:11)
- Rejoice in God's Blessings (Deut 12:7; Eph 1:3; 2Pet 1:3)
- Rejoice in God's Protection (Ps 5:11; Eph 6:11; 1Jn 5:18)
- Rejoice in God's Provision (Joel 2:23, Phil 4:19; 2Cor 9:8; Mt 6:25-33)
- Rejoice in God's Justice & Judgment (Deut 32:43; Ps 58:10-11; Prov 21:15)
- Rejoice in God's Mighty Works (1 Chron 16:8-10; Ps 92:4; Lk 19:37)
- Rejoice in God's Word (Ps 19:8, 119:111, 162; Jer 15:16)
- Rejoice in the Gospel (Lk 2:10; Phil 1:18; Rom 1:16)
- Rejoice in Our Salvation (Ps 13:5, 51:12; Isa 61:10; 1Pet 1:3-6, 8-9)
- Rejoice in the Resurrection of Christ (Mt 28:5-8; Lk 24:36-41, 50-53)
- Rejoice in the Return of Christ (Rev 19:7, 21:1-4; Jn 14:1-3)
- Rejoice in the Hope of Heaven (Mt 5:12, 25:21; Heb 12:2; Ps 16:11)
- Rejoice in the Kingdom of God (Rom 14:17; Mt 6:10, 33; Mk 1:15)
- Rejoice in Christian Fellowship (Phil 4:1; 1Thes 2:19-20; Philem 7)
- Rejoice in Trials & Suffering (Jas 1:2; Rom 5:3-4; Col 1:24)
- Rejoice in Obedience (Jn 14:15, 15:10-11; 1Sam 15:22)
- Rejoice in the Gift of a New Day (Ps 30:5, 118:24; Ecc 11:8)
- Rejoice in Our Spouse (Prov 5:18; Ecc 9:9; Isa 62:5)
- Rejoice in Godly Children (Ps 127:3-5; Prov 23:24-25, 29:17)
- Rejoice in Our Work (Ecc 3:22, 5:19; Ps 128:2; 1Cor 15:58)

### Concluding Challenge

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Dwell on the objects of joy this week. Fix your mind and affections upon the truths of Scripture that fill your soul with joy. Look up the verses of Scripture in this outline, and make a determined choice to praise God in every situation and circumstance.
2. Joy is related to gratitude (1Thes 5:16-18). So practice gratitude this week. If you're married, come up with a list of 5 things you appreciate most about your spouse. Write them down and share the list with your spouse. If you're single, choose someone in your life (family member, friend, coworker) and go through the same exercise.