

KEY



JOY!



DEFINING JOY
EVERLASTING
ACCESSIBLE &
POWERFUL

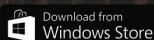
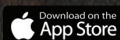
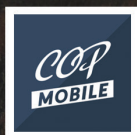
LESSONS 1-3
PASTOR JOSEPH SISSAC



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A NOTE
FROM
PASTOR



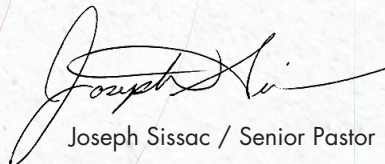
On New Year's Eve 2018, as we celebrated all God had done the previous year, and looked forward with great anticipation to the next, the Word of the Lord for Center of Praise was from Isaiah 43:19, ***"Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert."*** I believe this message is significant for us both corporately and as individual members of God's church.

One aspect of the ***"something new"*** that ***"will spring forth"*** is a new level of understanding God's truths and application of God's power. It is my prayer that in this new teaching series simply entitled JOY, the Holy Spirit will lead us to new depths of what JOY is, how to practically live it out and spread it throughout the world.

Over the next nine weeks, we will open the Word and our hearts to define, apply and spread the JOY of the Lord as never before. This booklet contains the teaching notes for the first three weeks targeted at defining JOY as EVERLASTING, ACCESSIBLE AND POWERFUL. As devoted Disciples of Christ, let's walk side-by-side and enter into the new thing springing forth from the Lord.

He's Here, He Knows, He's Able.




Joseph Sissac / Senior Pastor



JOY

1.1 EVERLASTING

Scripture References:
Isaiah 35:10
Jeremiah 33:9-11

As followers of Christ we must be careful that we don't adopt the views and ever-changing definitions of the world (Romans 12:2). The believer's perspective should be derived through the lens of **scripture**. When it comes to defining JOY, the world often relegates it to circumstances that are good and favorable. Things and people are said to bring JOY. Yet the reality is circumstances that bring about the feelings associated with JOY can change. A more appropriate view of this changing, positive emotion is **HAPPINESS** because it is based on the happenings of life.

Biblical JOY however is different because it is founded on much more than the changing happenings of the world. Biblical JOY is only found in the unchanging (immutable), nature and **character** of God. **JOY is an aspect of LOVE** that, among other things, is related to expressing great pleasure. The believer's great pleasure, even in everyday life experiences, can endure because of its unchanging and never-ending source. Disciples of Christ should live with **everlasting** JOY in an ever-changing world.

Isaiah says "everlasting joy" is for those who have been ransomed by God. Jeremiah continues stating those who were in a desolate place will give thanks with "**the voice of joy**", because "**the Lord is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting**". Our JOY doesn't have to rise and fall with the happenings of the world. It can be an everyday occurrence because of God's **unchanging** LOVE.



NOTES:



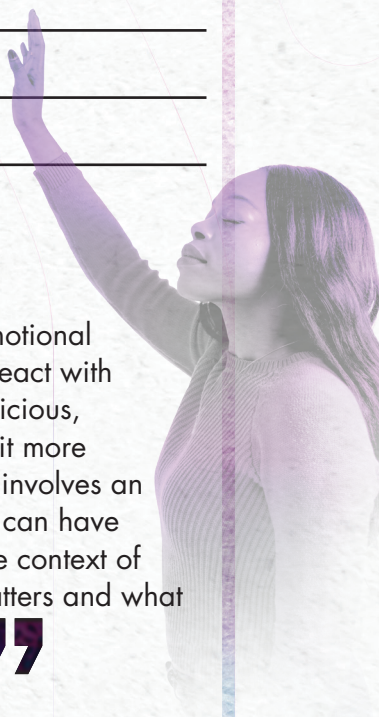
Happiness we understand to be an emotional response of pleasant feelings. So we react with happiness when we eat something delicious, accomplish something... But joy is a bit more complex. It's not just an emotion but it involves an appraisal of what is important. So we can have joy in the face of suffering, or joy in the context of difficulty. But only if we know what matters and what informs what can bring us deep joy.



-Dr. Pamela Ebstyne King
*Assistant Professor Marriage and Family Studies
Fuller Theological Seminary*



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JOY

1.2
ACCESSIBLE

Scripture References:
1 Chronicles 16:27
Matthew 6:10
James 1:2-4

The JOY that God desires His children to walk in cannot be found in the created stuff of the world. This world, tainted by sin, is constantly changing with popular **culture**. An unstable world can never be a consistent source of JOY. Jesus told His disciples to pray for something that is stable; ***"Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven"***. First Chronicles 16:27 states, ***"Splendor and majesty are before Him, strength and joy are in His place."*** This can be viewed as both the tabernacle and Heaven, and the JOY of the Lord is found in both.

One of the unchanging characteristics of God is His **omnipresence**. Since God is an ever-present God, those who recognize this fact and walk in it can live NOW with **EVERLASTING JOY**. Because of the work of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit within us, the continual sense of **pleasure** and fulfillment that exist in Heaven can be our reality in the earth.

James tells us to ***"count it all JOY when we go through various trials"***. Why? Because while the trials may be unexpected and difficult, God is faithful and certain to not only bring us through it, but also to **transform** us in the process. Some of life's joys are seasonal and conditional. But the JOY of the Lord is accessible anytime and **anywhere** for those who embrace HIM.



NOTES:

“Joy is the serious business of Heaven.”
-C.S. Lewis

“If you have no joy, there’s a leak in your Christianity somewhere.”
-Billy Sunday

“You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”
-Psalm 16:11 NASB



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JOY

1.3 POWERFUL

Scripture References:
1 Chronicles 16:27
Nehemiah 8:9-10

The **JOY of the LORD** is different from other joys in the world. Because God is the source, it is more than a feeling. First Chronicles 16:27 pairs **STRENGTH** and **JOY** together. In a way only made possible by God, His **JOY** provides strength (**grace**) to live and fulfill His plan for our lives.

The book of Nehemiah records the rebuilding of the walls of the city of Jerusalem after a period of destruction and exile. After its completion, Ezra the prophet and scribe stood before the people and read the law of God to all who could listen. Verse 9 says **"... all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law."** After being freed from exile and the rebuilding of the temple and city walls, why would the people weep after hearing the law of God? Perhaps it reminded them of past **failures**. After all, the exile to foreign lands was caused by their disobedience of the Lord's ways.

In response, Nehemiah gave another defining characteristic of God's **JOY**. **"The joy of the Lord is your strength."** (Nehemiah 8:10). Seeing the people's fear and grief, reflecting on past failures and lacking **confidence**, Nehemiah said **GOD'S JOY IS YOUR STRENGTH**. The same Hebrew word for **JOY** used in 1 Chronicles 16:27 is the same in Nehemiah 8:10. This means the **JOY-STRENGTH** combo that exists in Heaven is the very same that **equips** the believer with great pleasure and **power** to fulfill God's will on earth.



NOTES:

“ I choose joy... I will invite my God to be the God of circumstance ”
-Max Lucado, *Upwords*

“ I call the New Testament the Book of Joy. There is nowhere in the world another book that is pervaded with such a spirit of exhilaration. ”
-Henry Ward Beecher



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JOY.

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