

BE LIKE JESUS

Am I Becoming the Person God Wants Me to Be?

LESSON 2 – WHAT WILL GIVE ME TRUE JOY?

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” John 15:11 (NIV)

Biblical joy can be found in facing each day’s difficulties through the contentment that Christ offers.

1. **The Question is:** What gives us true happiness and **CONTENTMENT** in life?
 - A. First, let us identify the difference between **happiness** and joy. For many people today, being **happy** is dependent on whether life is “all good.” They rate their **happiness** on how they perceive negative issues going on at the time. When problems arise, their happiness fades away.
 - B. However, real **joy** is not dependent on circumstances. Ironically, it becomes the strongest when trouble comes.
 - C. The good news is that Christ offers us this joy—and it is a **joy that lasts** no matter what we face. *“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” John 15:11 (NIV)*
2. Despite my circumstances, I feel inner contentment and understand my **PURPOSE** in life.
We find that not only can we have joy despite our difficult circumstances, but also our joy can grow through our difficult circumstances. Yet this kind of joy is only available in Jesus. Celebrating God’s involvement in our lives evokes joy. Only Jesus can make our lives flourish in the midst of trouble because in him joy is strengthened, even when life is challenging.
“I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹²I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:11-13 (NIV)

How To Rise Above Your Circumstances and Experience Real Joy

1. When we walk in **Biblical** joy, it becomes the filter through which we see life. We are not talking about putting on rose-colored glasses but about actually having brand new eyes. Having joy is not a matter of sticking our head in the sand but **rising above** our circumstances by adopting an **eternal mindset**.
 - A. We can put aside worry, fret, and fear because we recognize that even though we may not be in control, God is **always in control**. He is in charge of the outcome, and joy comes from trusting the controller of all things. **Quote by Charles Swindoll** ~ *“When you accept the fact that sometimes seasons are dry and times are hard and that God is in control of both, you will discover a sense of divine refuge, because the hope then is in God and not yourself.”*
2. Joy **lifts others up**.
If we choose to practice joy on a regular basis, we will not only be far more **approachable** and **relatable** people, but also our attitude will rub off on others and make a significant impact on all the environments in which we find ourselves. When those around us can see that we **choose** to express joy despite our circumstances, our life becomes a powerful testimony for Christ. As we experience the inward transformation of our thoughts it becomes an outward expression in our actions that attract people to Christ. *“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.” Philippians 4:4-5 (NIV)*