

## **Overflow – Blessed to Be a Blessing** December 17, 2017

We are Loved to love; freed to free; saved to save; healed to heal; given Life to help people live; provided to be givers; filled to pour out!

**Ephesians 1:3 MSG** How blessed is God! What a blessing He is! He's the Father of our Master Jesus & takes us to the high places of blessing in Him. Long before He laid down earth's foundations, He had us in mind; settled on us as the focus of His love, to be made whole & holy by His love. Long ago He decided to adopt us into His family through Jesus. (What pleasure He took in planning this!) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of His lavish gift-giving by the hand of His beloved Son. **7** Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, His blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we're a free people; free of penalties & punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds; not just barely free, *Abundantly* free! He thought of everything, provided for everything we could possibly need, letting us in on the plans He took such delight in making.

Two things to remember about blessings in your life:

1. Every benefit and blessing in your life comes from God.
2. Remember that God's blessings are eternal not temporal.

**The Blessing of Joy**; the Spirit of joy; attitude of joy; lifestyle of joy

**John 15:11** I've told you these things so that you'll be filled w/ My joy. (My joy may remain in you) Yes, your joy will overflow!

*We're all searching for joy, mostly in the wrong places. We get married or pursue a certain career because we hope for joy. We divorce & change careers for the same reason. We commit sexual immorality or go after material possessions because we think it'll bring us joy.*

**Ecclesiastes 2:24** I decided there's nothing better than to enjoy food & drink & to find satisfaction in work. Then I realized that these pleasures are from the hand of God.<sup>25</sup> Who can eat or enjoy anything apart from Him? <sup>26</sup> God gives wisdom, knowledge & joy to those who please Him. *One of Satan's most successful lies is that God is a cosmic killjoy who enjoys making everyone miserable. Nope, He's a Being who has & IS joy; Everyone who know Him, enters into the only true & lasting Joy possible*

**Romans 15:13** I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely w/ joy & peace because you trust in Him. Then you'll overflow w/ confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Galatians 5:22** the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control.

*Rather than discouraging us from seeking joy, the Bible exhorts us to seek it, but to seek it in the right place. God Himself is the source of all joy. If we seek joy in God, we'll find internal & eternal joy.*

**Psalms 5:11** Let all who take refuge (trust) in You rejoice; let them sing(shout) joyful praises forever. Spread Your protection over them, that all who love Your name may be filled w/ joy. (be joyful in You)

**Acts 13:52** The believers were filled w/ joy & w/ the Holy Spirit.

**Philippians 4:4** Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!  
**NKJV** Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice!

*Every blessing He gives, is to show us His great love. Every delight to our senses, whether the taste of food, the beauty of creation or the sounds of birds chirping, should cause us to rejoice in the presence of our God.*

**Nehemiah 8:10b** “Go & celebrate w/ a feast of rich foods & sweet drinks, & share gifts of food w/ people who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don’t be dejected & sad (do not sorrow), for **the joy of the Lord is your strength!**”

### 3 SOURCES OF LIVING IN A SPIRIT OF JOY

**1. Joy comes from continually knowing/cultivating God’s presence.**

**Psalm 16:11 NKJV** You’ll show me the path of life; *In Your presence* is fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

*Jesus always lived in God’s presence; always aware of His Father. So, cultivating a sense of God’s presence is key to experiencing His joy. Even if we go through trials, we don’t lose our joy, because God’s w/ us. We should see God’s hand in every situation.*

**God wants us to be growing in His joy in all situations.**

**James 1:2** when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. (count it all joy) 3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.

*The life of Jesus a picture of biblical joy. Though He went through times of great difficulty & sorrow, especially as He bore our sins on the cross, He also had times of great joy.*

**Hebrews 12:2** We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now He’s seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne.

*The cross wasn’t joyful, but there was great joy ahead. So, biblical joy is the deep undercurrent or foundation in God that sustains us in & through times of challenge or sorrow or grief.*

## **2. Joy comes from being conformed to God's holiness.**

Jesus is called God's "Holy One." He was without sin.

**Hebrews 1:9** You love justice & hate evil. Therefore, O God, Your God has anointed You, pouring out the oil of joy on You more than on anyone else."

*Satan's a liar. He makes us think that real joy is found in sin, & holiness is dull & boring. But God's Word teaches that holiness & joy are bound together. Sin may give momentary pleasures, but it always leads to destruction & death. Remember when David sinned w/ Bathsheba, he was miserable until he repented & prayed...*

**Psalm 51:12** "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation"

*If you're lacking God's joy, examine your heart; make sure that you're not entertaining any known sin. Repent & ask God to restore to you the joy of His salvation. True joy comes only as we continually:*

*1. Know God's presence. 2. Walk in His paths of holiness.*

## **3. Joy comes from the confident hope of God's raising our bodies so that we can eternally dwell w/ Him.**

*We can rejoice because we know Jesus was raised & we'll be raised when He returns. Or the instant we die, our soul goes to be w/ Jesus in heaven.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:16** The Lord Himself will come down from heaven w/ a commanding shout, w/ the voice of the archangel, & w/ the trumpet call of God. First the believers who've died will rise from their graves.<sup>17</sup> Then, together w/ them, we who are still alive & remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we'll be w/ the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup> So encourage each other w/ these words.

**2 Corinthians 5:8 NKJV** We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

*All the blessings that God gives us in this life, are just samples, to whet our appetites, for the eternal blessings that we'll enjoy in His presence in heaven. God promises eternal, lasting joy for us in heaven.*

**Revelation 21:3** I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among His people! He'll live w/ them, & they'll be His people. God Himself will be w/ them.<sup>4</sup> He'll wipe every tear from their eyes, & there'll be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."

*We're filled w/ confident hope of His coming & the resurrection of our bodies & dwelling w/ Him eternally. This hope fills us w/ joy. You can have joy in this life when you know that you'll have eternal joy in life after death. "When you're ready to die, you're ready to live."*

**Psalms 16:11** You'll show me the way of life, granting me the joy of Your presence & the pleasures of living w/ You forever.

*We should seek Him continually, asking Him for the fullness of His joy that comes w/ our salvation. Don't rest until the Lord fills you w/ His joy.*

**Jonathan Edwards-** *"God is the highest good; & the enjoyment of Him is the only happiness w/ which our souls can be satisfied. In heaven & fully w/ God is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children, or the company of friends, are shadows; but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are scattered beams; but God is the sun. These are streams; but God is the fountain. These are drops; but God is the ocean. Therefore, it becomes us to spend this life only as a journey towards heaven, as it becomes us to make the seeking of our highest end & proper good, the whole of our lives; to which we should subordinate all other concerns of*

*life. Why should we labor, or set our hearts on anything else, but that which is our proper end, & true joy?"*

God desires you to be full of joy; that you'll only find in Him. Aim for it, seek after it, & don't rest until you enjoy a good measure of it! As you grow in God's joy, He'll be glorified through your life.

*"God is most glorified in us when we're most joyful in Him."*

**A prayer In response to this message on Joy:**

*Jesus, I praise You that I'm blessed & not stressed. I'm grateful that You've positioned me to be highly favored. Every good & perfect gift comes from You. Today, I'm excited that You're going to do awesome things in my life. Help me to see my present situation as an opportunity not a disappointment. Fill me anew with the Holy Spirit, joy, & optimism. Amen*