

Philippians 4:4 — “Rejoice! Live a Life of Exuding, Fervent Joy!”

“Joy is a quiet gladness of heart as one contemplates the goodness of God's saving grace in Christ Jesus” (John Calvin)

“The more we are consumed by the cross, the fuller will be our spiritual joy” (John Calvin)

Defining JOY:

- **JOY** is a Spirit-given confidence in the Christian's soul that God is sovereign & in control & good!
 - Quite simply: **Joy is the unshakeable conviction that God is in control!**
- Joy encompasses both happiness and sadness, because JOY sees beyond ANY PARTICULAR event to the sovereign Lord who stands above all events and ultimately has control over them.
 - Psalm 97.1 - The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice!

Beware of Joy-Killers! (What robs you of joy?)

1. **Not clinging to God's absolute sovereignty.** He controls and brings and works in & thru all things. Everything.
2. **Prayerlessness.** Not praying robs you of the joy of knowing/communing w/ God.
3. **Not feasting upon & fighting sin with Scripture.** God's Word is the joy of my heart (Ps 119.111).
4. **Circumstance orientation.** When your circumstances dictate your joy. When emotions take over & rule. The problem with this comes when something bad happens in circumstances then it bursts your joy.
5. **Ingratitude.** Thanklessness robs you of wondrous joy.
6. **Forgetfulness.** Forgetting what Jesus has done for you & what He has saved you from robs you of joy.
7. **Fear of the future.** Not knowing what's to come & growing anxious rather than trusting God.
8. **Self-centered/self-loving.** This kind of mindset makes the world revolve around you and it's a fast-track to disappointment & joylessness.

What does the Bible say about joy? —

The Main Point of Philippians 4:4: Live a life exuding fervent, abiding joy!

A few things to take note of as we exegete (dig down & draw out the meaning):

1. God tells us **THAT** we must rejoice! (rejoice!)

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2. God tells us **HOW** we must rejoice! (*in the Lord!*)

3. God tells us **WHEN** we must rejoice! (*always!*)

4. God tells us **EMPHATICALLY** that we must rejoice! (*again I will say, rejoice!*)

A FEW HELPFUL TRUTHS ABOUT “JOY”:

1. Joy is both a Spirit-worked grace & a command for every Christian to obey.

"When we hear that Christ was made a curse for us, let us believe it with joy and assurance. By faith Christ changes places with us. He gets our sins, we get His holiness.... God is not a God of sadness, death, etc., but the devil is. Christ is a God of joy, and so the Scriptures often say that we should rejoice ...A Christian should and must be a cheerful person" (Martin Luther).

2. Joy is something that only a Christian can truly understand.

JOY is a distinctively Christian virtue because it's GIVEN BY and A FRUIT OF the Spirit! Only Christians can have this deep conviction that God is GOOD & in CONTROL.

3. Joy is not dependent on outward circumstances.

Joy is deeper than happiness. Happiness is the fruit of prosperous conditions. It is the outcome of positive event, of favorable circumstances. **But** > Joy is independent of circumstances. It dwells in the heart—as a never-failing fountain. Happiness laughs when the sun shines—but grows sad when clouds gather. Joy sings on in all weathers and in all experiences. (JR Miller)

4. Joy is always rooted in the LORD (*who He is, what He's done, what He's promised, what He'll do*)

Joy is tethered to the **Sovereignty** of God (Ps 97.1) & to the **covenant-keeping love** of God (Ps 31.7)

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5. Joy is to mark Christians individually & especially corporately

Truly joyful and *joy-filled* people will not find grounds (and permit bitterness to brew) for disagreement & disunity with other fellow Christians!

6. Joy is a unique privilege we have in entering God's joy

In the Trinity - God delights in His Son; the SOn delights in the Father; they have an *intratrinitarian* delight/joy in each other. He is a “Blessed God” of “Undiminishing Joy!” You are caught up *into* this joy as you rejoice IN THE LORD.

“If the Lord be your joy, your joy will never dry up. All other things are but for a season; but God is forever and ever. Make Him your joy, the whole of your joy, and then let this joy absorb your every thought. Be baptized into this joy; plunge into the deeps of this unutterable bliss of joy in God” (Charles Spurgeon).

7. Joy is to permeate all that we do in life.

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In summary:

To rejoice in the Lord is to so praise God till your heart is sweetened and saturated with Christ that you don't focus on visible pleasures and problems because you're consumed w/ Christ!

When John Calvin preached on Philippians 4:4, he said:

“Having the LORD standing on our side, we have amply sufficient ground of joy! ... It is having a settled joy in God which will never be taken away from us!”

Joy to the World!

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
 Let earth receive her King;
 Let every heart prepare Him room,
 And Heaven and nature sing,
 And Heaven and nature sing,
 And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
 Nor thorns infest the ground;
 He comes to make His blessings flow
 Far as the curse is found,
 Far as the curse is found,
 Far as, far as, the curse is found.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
 Let men their songs employ;
 While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
 Repeat the sounding joy,
 Repeat the sounding joy,
 Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
 And makes the nations prove
 The glories of His righteousness,
 And wonders of His love,
 And wonders of His love,
 And wonders, wonders, of His love.

O Love that Will Not Let Me Go

O Love that will not let me go,
 I rest my weary soul in thee;
 I give thee back the life I owe,
 That in thine ocean depths its flow
 May richer, fuller be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
 I cannot close my heart to thee;
 I trace the rainbow through the rain,
 And feel the promise is not vain,
 That morn shall tearless be.

O light that followest all my way,
 I yield my flickering torch to thee;
 My heart restores its borrowed ray,
 That in thy sunshines blaze its day
 May brighter, fairer be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
 I dare not ask to fly from thee;
 I lay in dust life's glory dead,
 And from the ground there blossoms red
 Life that shall endless be.

Come People of the Risen King

Come, people of the Risen King,
 Who delight to bring Him praise;
 Come all and tune your hearts to sing
 To the Morning Star of grace.
 From the shifting shadows of the earth
 We will lift our eyes to Him,
 Where steady arms of mercy reach
 To gather children in.

And those struggling in the fight.
 For His perfect love will never change,
 And His mercies never cease,
 But follow us through all our days
 With the certain hope of peace.

*Rejoice, Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!
 One heart, one voice; O Church of Christ, rejoice!*

Come, those whose joy is morning sun,
 And those weeping through the night;
 Come, those who tell of battles won,

Come, young and old from every land -
 Men and women of the faith;
 Come, those with full or empty hands -
 Find the riches of His grace.
 Over all the world, His people sing -
 Shore to shore we hear them call
 The Truth that cries through every age:
 “Our God is all in all”

Rejoice the Lord is King!

Written by: Charles Wesley [from Psalm 97:1 — the Lord reigns, let all the earth rejoice!]

Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore;
Mortals give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Jesus, the Savior, reigns, the God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains He took His seat above;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail, He rules o'er earth and Heav'n,
The keys of death and hell are to our Jesus giv'n;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

He sits at God's right hand till all His foes submit,
And bow to His command, and fall beneath His feet:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

He all His foes shall quell, shall all our sins destroy,
And every bosom swell with pure seraphic joy;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Rejoice in glorious hope! Jesus the Judge shall come,
And take His servants up to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear th'archangel's voice;
The trump of God shall sound, rejoice!

Christian Joy! By John MacDuff

"The one great source of the Christian's joy is Christ. This, in a manner, swallows all the rest, or, rather, is the source of all the rest. The Christian rejoices because he has found Christ, "the Friend who sticks closer than a brother." The injunction of the apostle is, "Rejoice in the Lord," and again it is said, "We rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh;" and Peter, referring to the surpassing joy attained by many of these early Christians, says, "In whom believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

Christian! if you desire thus to "rejoice in the Lord," you must live near to the throne of grace—you must pray for a more lively faith in the efficacy and power of vital godliness, to cheer the heart in the darkest and dreariest hour. Remember! it is God's will, that you should be happy and cheerful every day—that you should find joy in everything around you—a pure, sinless, increasing joy—and, that you should pass through all life's vicissitudes, rejoicing in the love of Christ, and in the hope of glory. Strive, then, to live up to your privileges—to rise to all the joy that is set before you—and, to shed on all around, the bright and cheering rays of true religion.

And be it yours, to retain the possession of your joy, by abiding in your Savior's love—by living daily upon His fullness—resting beneath His shadow—lovingly obeying all His commands—submissively receiving all His chastenings—joyfully welcoming all His rebukes—unhesitatingly following all His leadings—glorifying Him in mercy and in trial, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and adversity; until that blessed hour when He will take you home, and you will

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