



SERIES: MY LIFE WITH GOD

A Cup of Joy

Life Reference: John 15:11 and Romans 15:13

Focus Verse:

These things I have spoken unto you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11 New King James).



When you hear the word joy, perhaps it invokes thoughts of twinkling stars and the biblical story of the first Christmas when the angel spoke to the shepherds, "I bring you good tidings of great joy." Maybe you hum the old carol, Joy to the World. But joy is not a holiday word. It is available year round.

Joy appears more than 150 times in the King James Version of the Holy Bible. In the New King James it is recorded from Genesis to Jude, spoken of by Old Testament patriarchs, prophets, and the psalmist. It is echoed by the apostles of Jesus. But, what is joy? Merriam Webster defines joy as a middle-English period noun derived from the Anglo-French *joie*, from Latin *gaudia*, plural of *gaudium*, from *gaudēre* to rejoice; probably akin to Greek *gēthein* to rejoice" (www.Merriam-Webster.com).

Joy doesn't sound off with the morning alarm clock or pop up with breakfast toast. It can't be spritzed on salad or grated over pasta. It has no visible color, no solid matter or liquid consistency. It is a spontaneous emotion that brightens your day and warms your soul.



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Life Reflection:

Describe the emotions that you have experienced at an unexpected moment of joy (laughter, tears, other).

After months or years have elapsed, how do you describe that joyous event to others?

Joy may dissipate when you face problems that force you into survival mode. Your exuberance may swing the opposite direction toward sad days as you consider the biblical advice "Count it all joy when you fall into various trials" (James 1:2, New King James).

Maybe life has overwhelmed you so that you think joy is only a memory from your past, not attainable now. Don't despair. You can refresh your joy journey with hope from the Scripture "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5b, New King James). Joy will return. That's a promise.

Life Reflection:

List a specific time period or an event that diminished your joy.

What steps did you take to renew that subdued joy?



Joy needs a container, an open receptacle. If your joy cup is cluttered with sad memories, clean out the hopelessness and other things that could pollute pure joy. When you joy returns, expect tiny drops first. One today, another tomorrow. As you open yourself to joyful experiences, each drop will bring your cup closer to the full mark. Don't stop there. Joy to the brim is not enough. Joy is intended to overflow, to splash onto others, to be uncontainable. Don't hide it. Let it show. Let it flow.

**"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over."**

Psalm 23:5 New King James

Life Response:

Joy is a result of believing in the God of hope. It is a blessing, a promise to you. If you are staring into an empty cup, fill it with a joy Scripture every morning. Meditate on a spiritual moment when joy was yours. Begin your prayers with praises rather than requests. Cling to the promise that joy can be yours.

Don't wait for joy to find you. Go on a joy hunt! Look for it in unexpected places. When your search is successful, tiny drops of joy will turn into a steady stream, splashing over the brim and down the sides of your cup. When it overflows, share it. You may be the starter, the first drop of hope, in someone else's empty joy cup.

**"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."**

Romans 15:13, New King James

My Prayer:

Dear Lord, I am thankful for refreshing joy when I immerse myself in Your presence. I believe in You, the God of hope. Amen.



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More Life with God References: A Month of Joy Readings

- 1) I Kings 1:40
- 2) I Chronicles 15:16
- 3) I Chronicles 29:9
- 4) Ezra 3:12-13
- 5) Nehemiah 12:43
- 6) Esther 9:22
- 7) Psalm 16:11
- 8) Psalm 32:11
- 9) Psalm 51:12
- 10) Psalm 66:1
- 11) Psalm 100:1
- 12) Psalm 126:5
- 13) Proverbs 15:23
- 14) Ecclesiastes 5:20
- 15) Isaiah 12:3
- 16) Isaiah 29:19
- 17) Jeremiah 15:16
- 18) Habakkuk 3:18
- 19) Zephaniah 3:17
- 20) Matthew 25:21
- 21) Luke 15:10
- 22) John 15:11
- 23) Acts 2:28
- 24) Acts 20:24
- 25) Romans 14:17
- 26) II Corinthians 1:24
- 27) Galatians 5:22
- 28) Hebrews 12:2
- 29) I Peter 4:13
- 30) I John 1:4
- 31) Jude 1:24

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