

# Joy

The Fruits of the Spirit · Fruits of the Spirit

Joy, the second fruit of the Spirit, represents a profound spiritual gladness that transcends circumstances, trials, and earthly conditions. Unlike happiness, which depends upon favorable happenings and proves as fickle as the weather, true Christian joy springs from an unchanging source—the knowledge of God, assurance of salvation, and communion with Christ. This χαρά (chara) constitutes not a fleeting emotion but a settled disposition of the soul, rooted in eternal realities rather than temporary pleasures. It persists when happiness fails, shines brightest in darkness, and often surprises the world by flourishing amid persecution and trial.

**Note:** The Greek χαρά (chara) denotes deep-seated gladness independent of external circumstances. This joy characterized the early church even amid severe persecution—the disciples rejoiced after being beaten for Christ's name (Acts 5:41), and believers in Thessalonica received the word 'in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost' (1 Thessalonians 1:6). Paul, imprisoned in Rome, repeatedly commanded believers to 'rejoice in the Lord always' (Philippians 4:4), demonstrating joy's supernatural origin and enduring nature.

Scripture establishes the Lord Himself as joy's fountain and source. Nehemiah declared, 'The joy of the LORD is your strength' (Nehemiah 8:10)—not joy in circumstances, possessions, or human relationships, but joy derived from knowing the covenant-keeping God. David testified, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore' (Psalm 16:11). This joy flows from reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins, and the hope of glory. It springs from beholding God's character, delighting in His Word, and resting in His promises. While the world seeks joy in fleeting pleasures, believers find inexhaustible gladness in their relationship with the

eternal God.

Christ commanded His disciples to abide in His love 'that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full' (John 15:11). This abiding joy results from maintaining vital union with Christ through faith, obedience, and prayer. Jesus prayed that believers might 'have his joy fulfilled in themselves' (John 17:13), demonstrating that Christian joy reflects participation in Christ's own gladness. Though He was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, Christ possessed perfect joy in doing His Father's will and looked beyond the cross's suffering to 'the joy that was set before him' (Hebrews 12:2). Similarly, believers rejoice not in present affliction but in future glory, not in temporal comforts but in eternal inheritance.

This joy manifests peculiar strength in trials and tribulation. James exhorted, 'Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations' (James 1:2), for testing produces patience and maturity. Peter wrote of believers who, though not having seen Christ, 'yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory' (1 Peter 1:8). Paul and Silas sang praises at midnight with their backs bleeding in a Philippian jail. The early church faced persecution 'rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name' (Acts 5:41). Such counter-intuitive joy testifies powerfully to the Spirit's supernatural work, confounding worldly wisdom and demonstrating that believers possess resources unknown to unregenerate humanity.

Moreover, joy serves as evidence of the Spirit's indwelling and the kingdom's presence. Paul declared, 'The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost' (Romans 14:17). Where the Spirit dwells, joy inevitably follows, for He bears witness to believers' adoption, seals them unto redemption, and fills them with assurance. This joy should characterize corporate worship, as saints gather to celebrate God's goodness, recount His mercies, and anticipate His promises. It energizes

service, for 'the joy of the LORD is your strength.' It attracts unbelievers, who observe believers possessing gladness amid circumstances that would crush natural spirits. This supernatural joy glorifies God, vindicates His wisdom, and demonstrates that in knowing Him lies humanity's chief end and greatest pleasure.

## Key Verses

### **Nehemiah 8:10**

Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

### **John 15:11**

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

### **Philippians 4:4**

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

### **1 Peter 1:8**

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

### **Psalms 16:11**

Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

### **Romans 14:17**

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

### **James 1:2**

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.