

Ephesians Series

Lesson #197

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Dean Bible Ministries

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Spiritual Skills
How to Use Joy to Face Life
Hebrews 12:1–2



EPHESIANS

THE WEALTH, WALK
& WARFARE
OF THE BELIEVER

Joy/Inner Happiness/Tranquility of Soul
James 1:3; John 15:11: 17:13

**Personal Love
for God**
Deut. 6:5

**Biblical Love for All;
Christian Love for
Other Believers**
Lev. 19:18; Jn. 13:34, 35

**Occupation with
Christ**
Heb. 12:2; Php. 3:20

Personal Sense of our Eternal Destiny
Col. 3:24; 1 Pet. 1:4

Faith-Rest Drill
Prov. 3:5, 6

Grace Orientation
Eph. 2:8, 9
2 Pet. 3:18

**Doctrinal
Orientation**
2 Pet. 3:18

Walking by the Spirit/Filled by the Spirit
Gal. 5:16

Confession of Sin, 1 John 1:9

What the Bible Teaches About

Joy, Inner Happiness, Sharing Christ's Joy



1. The final spiritual skill is that referred to as joy, inner happiness, or sharing the happiness of God. Our focus here is on developing the skill aspect, which relates to joy as a mental attitude, rather than its overt expression, which often combines with an emotional dimension. This two-fold aspect often confuses people.

2. A number of different words are used in both the Old Testament and New Testament to express the ideas of joy, inner happiness, tranquility of the believer. The focus here is on that which is related to the spiritual life of the Church Age. In this sense, the joy of the Christian is a supernatural product of God the Holy Spirit as a result of the individual believer's spiritual growth called "walking by means of the Spirit."

Rom. 14:17, “for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy by means of the Holy Spirit.”

Rom. 15:13, “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.”

Gal. 5:16, “I say then: Walk by means of the Spirit, and it will be impossible to bring to completion the lust of the flesh.”

Gal. 5:22, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Gal. 5:23, “gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

3. Central passages

Heb. 12:2, “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

James 1:2, “My brethren, count it all joy when you encounter into various adversities,

James 1:3, “because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

James 1:4, “But let endurance have its maturing work, that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.”

1 Pet. 1:8, “whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,”

Gal. 5:22, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Gal. 5:23, “gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

4. The paradox in our understanding of the words joy and happiness is that some passages speak of this as a mindset, a mental attitude, which is not an emotion, and other passages speak of it as an emotion or with an emotional dimension.

On the one hand, it is clear in a number of passages that the idea of joy is a mental attitude. For example, an emotion cannot be commanded, yet in several passages joy or rejoicing are commanded.

Matt. 5:11, “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Matt. 5:12, “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

ἀγαλλιάω *agalliaō* 2 plur pres mid impera to exult, rejoice

Php. 3:1, “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.”

Php. 4:4, “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”

1 Thess. 5:16, “Rejoice always,”

Some verses that speak of a more external, emotional expression of inner joy:

Luke 2:10, “Then the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.’ ”

Luke 10:17, “Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.’ ”

Luke 24:52, “And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,”

Acts 12:14, “When she recognized Peter’s voice, because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate.”

5. In other passages joy is described as having degrees of joy. This is related to the individual's spiritual maturation.

John 15:11, “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”

John 16:24, “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”

Php. 2:2, “fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.”

6. Definition. The Scriptures use a number of words to express the ideas we associate with happiness—words for “blessed” include this idea of a happiness the believer has in relation to positive ways that God has provided for the individual. Other words express the idea of a stable mental attitude of contentment, tranquility, or a relaxed mental attitude resulting from trusting God in the midst of difficult or even horrific circumstances.

John 16:20, “Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.”

John 16:22, “Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.”

Jesus experienced emotional turmoil in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Matt. 26:37, “And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.

Matt. 26:38, “Then He said to them, ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.’ ”

λυπέω *lypeō* pres mid infin to grieve, pain, “to be grieved or sad to the point of distress”

ἀδημονέω *adēmoneō* pres act infin to be very heavy

περίλυπος *perilypos* Adjective fem sing nom very sorrowful

Acts 13:52, “And the disciples were filled with [of–genitive of description] joy and with the Holy Spirit.”

7. In many passages we learn that sorrow (grief, distress) co-exists with joy. At the same time a person may have inner peace, tranquility, and contentment, but at the same time experience emotional turmoil, sorrow, or grief. Feelings of sorrow, grief, and distress are not in themselves sinful. But if we do not use the spiritual skill of our inner happiness, then we fall into sin.

8. James 1:2–4

James 1:2, “My brethren, think about your trials with joy when you fall into various forms of adversity,

James 1:3, “because you KNOW that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

James 1:4, “But let endurance have its perfect work, that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.”

9. Thus thinking about the role of adversity in God's spiritual growth process enables us to be stabilized by inner happiness and a mental attitude based on understanding God's plan. This is related to hope and God's love for us in Romans 5:3–5.

Rom. 5:3, “And not only that, but we also glory in trouble (adversity), knowing that adversity produces endurance;

Rom. 5:4, “and endurance, character; and character, hope.

Rom. 5:5, “Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

10. Foundational joy is produced by the Holy Spirit and is not based on circumstances, feelings, people, or events. Therefore we can and should have real joy even in the midst of negative circumstances.

2 Cor. 7:4, “Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation.”

2 Cor. 8:2, “that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.”

11. Thus as a spiritual skill, we choose, it is our volition, our responsibility before God based on what He has revealed to us, to choose to apply what we know, which then results in our stable mindset of contentment and tranquility.

Php. 4:10, “But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.

Php. 4:11, “Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

Php. 4:12, “I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

Php. 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

12. Characteristics of a worthy walk.

Col. 1:10, “that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Col. 1:11, “strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;”

**Eph. 4:17, “This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord,
that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles
walk, in the futility of their mind,”**