

The Importance of Joy Devotion

In the Bible, the concept of joy is serious business. It's not a superficial warm and fuzzy kind of feeling. It's a fruit of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22**) and it can help the believer overcome all kinds of adversity. The verse above reveals that we gain strength from the joy that God gives us. And the Scriptures indicate that when we lose our joy, we can become victims of despair and even sickness. **Proverbs 17:22** (TLB) says, "A cheerful heart does good like a medicine, but a broken spirit makes one sick." Have you ever gotten sick after something happened to disappoint or depress you? I have. Next time you're ill, ask yourself if you've been struggling with negative emotions.

Proverbs 15:15 (TLB) says, "When a man is gloomy, everything seems to go wrong; when he is cheerful, everything seems right!" Ever notice how your moods can affect your whole outlook on life? When you're feeling down, it can seem like nothing's going right, and everyone around you irritates you. But if you're feeling particularly cheerful one day, almost nothing bothers you. When you're filled with the joy of the Lord, you feel strong, capable, and ready for anything. That's why a joy-filled believer is hard for the devil to handle. If the enemy can steal your joy, he can rob you of almost anything, including your health.

Romans 14:17 (NIV) says that the kingdom of God is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." That should tell us just how valuable joy is to the believer. Jesus spoke about joy a lot. It was the Savior's desire that His disciples would be filled with joy. (**John 16:22, 17:13**)

In **John 16:24** (NLT), Jesus says, "Ask, using My name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy." And in **First Thessalonians 5:16** (NIV), Paul writes, "Be joyful always."

The Bible tells us that God wants us to serve Him with joy. **Psalm 100:2** (NASB) says, "Serve the Lord with gladness." And **Deuteronomy 28:47-48** (NIV) says that because God's people refused to serve Him "joyfully and gladly," He would cause them to serve their enemies instead. The Lord deserves to have us serve Him with joy, and He's given us His Holy Spirit as our source of joy.

Let me encourage you to memorize **Psalm 86:4** (NIV), so that the next time you need a fresh dose of joy, you can pray like David did: "Bring joy to Your servant, for to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul." Before you know it, you'll be filled with the joy of the Lord, and nothing will be able to keep you down!

Prayer: Lord, we ask that by Your Spirit, You would fill us with everlasting joy. Give us a happy heart and a cheerful mind so that we may walk in wholeness. (**Proverbs 17:22** AMP) Whenever we're tempted to despair, remind us of the importance of joy, and how You deserve cheerful servants. Thank You that Your joy makes us strong!