

# Encouraging Reminders from Scripture about Joy

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Joy: that uncontrollable, unexplainable feeling of delight that is written all over our faces, can lead to spontaneous dancing or skipping, and might even cause us to high-five everyone around us.

[Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#) defines it as “the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires.”

For many, it is that quality of Christian life that makes you feel godly contentment in everything you do, say, think, and feel. However, for some, finding joy is that one element of life that always seems just out of their reach – something they are constantly pursuing but coming up empty.

Trials and hardships in life can make it especially challenging to find joy in life, but the Bible gives us the confidence that joy is possible and achievable even in the darkest of times. This is because joy isn't based on our happiness, but in our relationship and trust in God.

Joy can be in us, even while it is not around us in the world.



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## What Is Joy and How Is It Different from Happiness?

As stated earlier from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, joy is an emotion brought on by success, good fortune or even the knowledge that something you have been hoping for will be yours.

Many might see that definition and think that happiness is synonymous with joy, which can be true in some sense, but there are marked differences.

Happiness, [defined](#) as a “state of well-being and contentment; a pleasurable or satisfying experience,” can sometime be associated with the feeling you get when something desired is gained, then you are truly happy. “If I just get that job; if I just win the lottery; if I just marry the right person and start a family, I will be happy.” Once you get what you have been hoping and praying for, then the feeling will begin and everything around you becomes easier to get through.

However, joy is an emotion that can be experienced while waiting for that long-awaited prayer to be answered or when all chaos is happening around you. It is carrying an inner sense of joy inside of you in all circumstances, even when you don’t know what is around the next bend.

Happiness has a set point where it begins; joy can happen at any time and can still be felt even when what you thought would make you happy does not.

If it seems impossible to be joyful in the current situation you are in, the [Bible](#) has some words of wisdom to guide you forward.

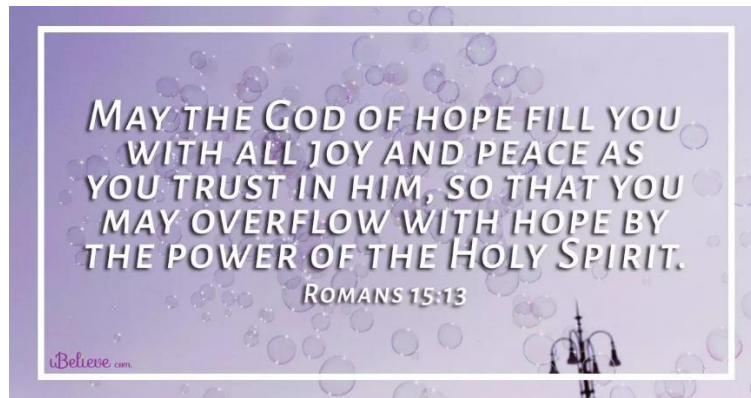


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## What Does the Bible Say about Joy?

Several verses involve joy in the Bible, and peace is associated with it to clarify that when you have joy, peace is right there with it.

“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](#)).

“Go and eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God has already accepted your works” (Eccl. 9:7).

Some joy comes with knowing that God approves of your obedience to His will, which can be viewed as eternal joy that only comes from God.

“The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hopes of the wicked come to nothing” ([Proverbs 10:28](#)).

“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your [faith](#), the salvation of your souls” ([1 Peter 1:8-9](#)).

One area that many would question how you could have joy is while facing trials and challenges. There are several verses encouraging joy in the face of sadness.

“Consider it joy, my brothers and sisters, when you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance” ([James 1:2-3](#)).

“And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore, I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord,” ([Psalm 27:6](#)).



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## Is It Possible to Have Joy in Painful Circumstances?

With the verses listed above, it seems that joy is possible when facing the trials of life. Yet many may wonder how you can have joy when you are dealing with the loss of a loved one, facing a personal health crisis, or even enduring the nationwide trials in recent years.

The answer is that yes, you can be joyful in painful circumstances because unlike happiness, joy is found in God and not your wants and needs being fulfilled.

In the book of [Nehemiah](#), Nehemiah shares that joy from the Lord brings [strength](#): “Then he said to them, ‘Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this day is holy* to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength”’ ([Nehemiah 8:10](#)).

Joy is possible because difficult situations encourage us to draw closer to the Lord for strength, hope, and guidance on how to proceed forward. Trusting Him brings joy.

Joy doesn’t have to resemble jumping up and down as you go through hard times, but it can look like having peace and hope that things will get better, or even remembering that you aren’t alone in this struggle. God is with you and brings people to you to help comfort you.

Your prayers may not be answered as you would hope, or maybe a painful curveball has entered your life that seems to have knocked the wind out of you. But joy, not happiness, reminds you to stay encouraged and know this situation will turn out for good to the glory of God.





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## A Prayer to Have Joy

As we end, let's pray to have joy in our lives while going through good and bad times.  
*Dear Heavenly Father,*

*Thank you for being with us as we go through the tough situations of life today. We know, as said in Your Word, that just because we are Christ followers doesn't mean we are exempt from struggle. However, instead of letting situations take the joy that we could have, I pray that we instead renew our joy by trusting Your way and Your path ahead for us. Let us find the joy in everything we experience, knowing that as we find the good (or potential good) You will bring to this situation, our inner joy will begin to grow and impact not only ourselves but those around us. Thank you for being with us in these times and let us uphold Your [peace](#) through being joyful in all situations.*

*In Jesus's name we pray,  
Amen.*

Many may see that happiness and joy go hand in hand, but God's Word reveals that having joy in the Lord is what keeps you going through struggles and hardships. Joy connects with peace while in a painful situation, remembering that God knows everything ahead and uses every situation for our good as we are called to His purpose ([Rom. 8:28](#)). So, even when we don't know how tough circumstances will get better, and with tears streaming down our faces, let us pray for God's joy to come into our lives to strengthen us for each step, and each breath ahead.

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