

Joyce Meyer: The Secret to Supernatural Joy in Your Life

Although Jesus was “a man of suffering, and familiar with pain” (Isa. 53:3, NIV), He possessed a deep joy beyond anything the world could offer. As He faced a terrible death on the cross, He spoke to His disciples and said, “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete” (John 15:11).

Jesus also said in John 10:10, “I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)” (AMPC). It’s clearly God’s desire for us to enjoy our lives, not just get through each day with an occasional plan to do something that we’re excited about.

The book of Philippians is known as the epistle of joy because the author, the apostle Paul, mentions joy 19 times throughout the four chapters.

It’s interesting to note that Paul wrote Philippians while he was in prison. This shows us that no matter what our circumstances are, as believers in Christ, we can experience the joy of the Lord. The joy Jesus gives is a joy that we can have even when things are not going well in our lives.

Paul’s Secret to Supernatural Joy

You may be wondering, like I did, “What was Paul’s secret? How could he have joy when he was in prison?”

As you read through Philippians, you will find that he mentions the mind or functions of the mind 16 times. The thoughts you choose to think about or meditate on have a lot to do with your level of joy. You can think yourself into being miserable, or you can think yourself happy!

For example, if you sit around thinking about what you don't have or what people don't do for you that you think they should do, then you will have a miserable day and feel sorry for yourself. Or you can decide, "No! I'm not going to think like that. I know my thoughts will affect my moods and actions, so I'm going to think about what people do for me and what I do have. No matter what is going on in my life, I know Jesus loves me, and He's with me. If I have Him, I don't really need anything else to make me happy!"

Jesus didn't die for us just so we can have a religion; He wants us to have a personal, intimate relationship with Him so we can experience His joy.

Perspective Is Key

In Philippians 1:1 (NIV), Paul identifies himself and Timothy as "servants of Christ Jesus." In this greeting, Paul didn't call himself by a fancy or impressive title but as a servant. And "servants of Christ Jesus" is what we're all supposed to be as Christians.

It's important to understand that we cannot be self-centered and selfish and be happy and filled with joy at the same time. I know from personal experience that it's impossible to be selfish *and* happy.

Years ago I was in leadership at our church, teaching a Bible study, and yet I was not happy. I asked the Lord, "Why am I not happy?" God spoke to my heart and said, "You're selfish."

This was not easy to hear, but I had to face it before I could really "have and enjoy" the life Jesus came to give me. It was a life-changing revelation to realize that I couldn't really serve God and not serve people.

Real Joy Comes When You're Serving Others

I've had good opportunities to practice being a servant. One

time Dave hurt his back, and he needed a lot of help for a while. He couldn't fully dress himself or bend over to put on his shoes and socks.

We treated his condition with ice and pain medication, but he still couldn't function completely on his own, so I had to help him. In the morning I would hear him say, "Where is my helper?" I had become Dave's valet! (And he was enjoying it a bit too much.)

There are many ways we can serve God by helping others. When we're spending time in prayer each day, we should ask Him, "What can I do for You today, Lord? Who can I help today?" I've found that when I do this, He will put someone on my mind that I can encourage or reach out to in some way that day.

I may call them or send a text, letting them know how much I appreciate them. Or I may see a way I can help meet a need someone has. Living this way has greatly increased the joy of the Lord in my soul. I find that I'm the happiest I could be when I'm helping to make someone else's life better.

I want to encourage you to get your mind off of yourself and onto what you can do for others. See yourself as a servant of Jesus Christ and spend more time thinking about how you can encourage someone or meet someone's need. As you do, you'll discover more of the joy Jesus wants to give you! {eoa}

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