

One of the Simplest Ways to Immediately Increase Your Joy

I love God's Word because it is our instructional manual for life! In fact, there is an answer for every problem we face in the Bible, including how to make a bad day increase our joy every single day.

For example, if you're having a bad day, one of the worst things you can do is to keep thinking about yourself and all of your own problems. It only makes things worse. The best thing you can do is get your mind off yourself and help someone else.

The apostle Paul says in Acts 20:35 (NIV): "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

So, if I'm having a bad day, this Scripture tells me I can be happier by simply getting myself off my mind and helping someone else.

Helping others isn't something you may feel like doing—it requires a decision, especially when you're concerned about a problem or just feeling down. But making a choice to be good to others has the power to help you and them. It's a spiritual principle that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

It's actually amazing how just a few words of encouragement can change someone's entire day. Sometimes it can even change their life!

It can be as simple as picking up the phone and calling a friend who's been going through a rough time, letting them know you're thinking about them and praying for their situation. Or maybe you can send someone a text message to let

them know how valuable they are and how much you care.

If you're wondering, "How does helping someone else make me happier?" just think about Christmas morning.

You've spent time shopping for gifts, spending your money and sacrificing financially. You've also wrapped them and placed them under the tree for your kids or relatives. And now it's finally time to open them!

Sure, it's fun to receive a gift and open it; however, the best part is watching others open their gifts. Why? Because you have sacrificed, spent your time and money and really invested something into this. So, as you watch them open and enjoy what you did for them, great joy is released in your life.

I recently read a tremendous story on this topic about William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army. It was Christmas Eve, 1910, and due to sickness, he wasn't going to be able to attend the organization's annual convention. He had become an invalid, and his eyesight was failing.

Normally, Booth would speak to the workers and share an encouraging message with these men and women who had spent long hours in service during the Christmas season. But this year, knowing he couldn't attend, he decided to send a message by telegram that could be read to all those in attendance.

Booth searched his heart and mind and reviewed his years of ministry, looking for a message that would summarize his life and the mission of The Salvation Army. He wanted to compose a speech that would encourage these men and women.

That night, when the thousands of delegates met, the moderator shared the news that William Booth would not be present due to his failing health. They were naturally disappointed; however, he conveyed that Booth had sent something he wanted to share with them in his absence.

The moderator opened the telegram, then read William Booth's one-word message: "Others."

This story really speaks to me. It's so easy to always focus on ourselves—what we want and what we think. But we often have it backward. Remember Acts 20:35: God is saying when we make others our priority, then everything else will fall into place and we will end up incredibly happy.

Here's another scripture that says it well: "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matt. 6:33 NIV).

God's Word clearly shows us that when we have a need in our own life, helping others is one of the most powerful things we can do.

Are you going through a difficult time? Are you waiting for a breakthrough in a certain area? If so, Psalm 37:3 (AMPC) has the answer for every problem you will face:

"Trust (lean on, rely on, and be confident) in the Lord and do good; so shall you dwell in the land and feed surely on His faithfulness, and truly you shall be fed."

The bottom line here is: Trust God and do good. Because when you place your trust and hope in the Lord and commit yourself to helping others and taking care of their problems, you open the door for God to do incredible things in your own life.

Would you like to make every day better? Would you like to find joy even in the midst of difficult times? Then begin taking just a few minutes every day to think about what you can do to help someone else.

You'll find that when you make others your focus, God's blessings will always come back to you! {eo}