

Developing Spiritual Character

The Choice To Rejoice

Galatians 5:22-23 & Romans 5:1-5

Regardless of our circumstances, we can choose to be joyful!

An Important Distinction:

- Happiness depends on _____
- Joy is an _____; a _____

As Christians, we can be the most joyful people in the world!

Three Reasons For Our Joy

1. We have _____ (Romans 5:1-2)

In Christ Jesus...

- My past is _____
- My future is _____
- My present is _____ and _____

2. God has a _____ (Romans 5:3-5)

We can rejoice in our sufferings knowing that God is at work in the midst of them!

Our Suffering Can Produce:

- _____ - The ability to handle pressure without giving up
- _____ - Proven reliable
- _____ - Confidence in God's Power

3. God is _____

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35-39)

Joy is not the _____ of suffering
- Joy is the _____ of God!

Developing Inner Joy

1. Develop the _____

“give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

2. Cultivate the art of _____

“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” (Acts 20:35)

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)

Stingy people are rarely _____ people

3. _____ appreciation to others

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,” (Philippians 1:3)

4. Get involved in _____ others

“It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
(Matthew 20:26-28)

“rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.”(Ephesians 6:7-8)

Joy comes as we get our focus off _____ and concentrate on _____ others

5. _____ **Christ with others**

“Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.” (Luke 15:7)

“For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.” (Mark 8:35)

Joy is not something we can permanently _____, because joy is something we can always _____

Making It Personal:

- Have you experienced God’s love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ – the foundation for ongoing joy?
- What reasons for our joy do you most need to remind yourself of this week?
- What specific steps do you need to take this week to make the choice to rejoice?

