

Final Instructions from Christ

Joy - the Product of our relationship with Christ **John 13-16**

This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don't be dejected and sad, for the joy of the LORD is your strength! Nehemiah 8:10b

Final Instructions in **John 14-16**

Love - the measure of our relationship with Christ

Peace - the depth of our relationship with Christ

Then an unusual instruction in the light of the soon arrest, torture and crucifixion for Christ and the betrayal and denial in fear on the part of the disciples. - **Be Joyful!**

Joy - the fruit of our relationship with Christ.

Question: "What is the joy of the Lord?"

Answer: The joy of the Lord is the gladness of heart that comes from knowing God, abiding in Christ, and being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Seen clearly in Christ's:

Birth. *When Jesus was born, the angels announced "good tidings of great joy" (Luke 2:10). All who find Jesus know, with the shepherds of the nativity, the joy He brings. Even before His birth, Jesus had brought joy, as attested to in Mary's song (Luke 1:47) and by John's response to hearing Mary's voice as he "leaped for joy" in his mother's womb (Luke 1:44).*

Ministry. *Jesus exemplified joy in His ministry. His enemies accused Him of being too joyful (Luke 7:34). Jesus described Himself as a bridegroom enjoying a wedding feast (Mark 2:18-20); He "rejoiced in the Holy Spirit" (Luke 10:21); Joy is reflected in many of Jesus' parables, including the three stories in Luke 15, which mention "rejoicing in the presence of the angels" (Luke 15:10) and end with a joyful shepherd, a joyful woman, and a joyful father.*

Fulfilled in the Early Church

The early church was characterized by gladness and the joy of the Lord (Acts 2:46; 13:52), and "joy in the Holy Spirit" is a distinguishing mark of the kingdom of God (Romans 14:17). Those who are part of the kingdom share in the kingdom's delight. When Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned in Philippi they could still rejoice and praise God (Acts 16:23-25)

I. The Particulars of this Joy

John 15:1-11

A. Christ's gift - My Joy (joy and gift have same base word)

1. It is the joy of sonship. In Christ we are children of God

1 John 3:1a See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are!

2. It is the joy of service.

Psalm 40:8 I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart."

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. John 4:34

3. It is the joy of sacrifice **Hebrews 12:2**

We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.

B. Continuous - Might Remain

1. It is dependent upon the connection with the everlasting love of Christ (Abide in Christ and His Word in us)

2. It is not subject to the changing world around us

C. Complete - Might be full

(Note John 3:29, 15:11, 16:24, 1 John 1:4, 2 John 1:12)

1. Full means complete or even overflowing

2. Compared with the joy of the world which is temporal and sometimes leads quickly to remorse or guilt

II. The Path to this Joy

John 16:16-24

A. Sorrow Transformed into Joy

1. Not substituted - that is the world's path

2. For the disciples it was sorrow of Christ death turned to the rejoicing of His resurrection

3. It is illustrated by the sorrow (pain) of birth being transformed into the joy of the baby

4. For us it is the sorrow for our sin (repentance) transformed into the joy of forgiveness in salvation **Psalm 32**

B. Surrender Translated into Joy

1. We surrender our desires to Him for He is coming again

2. We see through new eyes

John 16:22 So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again; then you will rejoice, and no one can rob you of that joy.

1 Peter 1:8 You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy.

C. Sealed in Trusting Joy

1. Trusting His promise - no one can take your joy away

2. Trusting in prayer - **Asking the Father** - means sonship

In my Name - means His will and His authority

Believing we have received = **joy complete**

Christian Joy should be the prevailing Characteristic of every Christian

How is your heart today? Does Joy reign?