

Joy is ^ _____.

Joy is _____ pervasive _____, and it is rooted in God's _____ love _____.

“Joy is natural in the presence of [God's] love. Joy is a pervasive sense – not just a thought – of well-being: of overall and ultimate well-being.”
— Dallas Willard

“But don’t rejoice because evil spirits obey you; rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” *Luke 10:20*

How do we find joy and keep it?

1. Joy comes as we _____ remain _____ in Jesus.

“**Remain** in me, and I will **remain** in you. For a branch cannot produce **fruit** if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be **fruitful** unless you **remain** in me. **Yes, I am the vine**; you are the branches.” *John 15:4-5*

“I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my **joy**. Yes, your **joy** will overflow!” *John 15:11*

2. We keep joy by being a person _____ for _____ and _____ with _____ others.

“What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?” *Matthew 16:26*

Therefore encourage each other and build **each other** up, just as you are already doing. *1 Thessalonians 5:11*

“Having a large social network...giving back to your community...and nurturing a healthy marriage or close friendships can do more than add many years to your life. Together they represent the living with purpose that comes from working hard, reaching out to others, and bouncing back from difficult times.” — The Longevity Project

“But here again, we must not be passive. We may allow joy to dissipate...It is our option to look to the greatness and goodness of God and what He will do in our lives.” — Dallas Willard

For the remainder of the summer, use these One Year New Testament questions to discuss with your small group or answer individually. Discussion questions related to the weekend message will resume this fall.

Devotional Thought

There were people in Corinth who greatly opposed Paul. They attacked his physical appearance and his ability to clearly communicate. Paul attempted to change their mindset by reminding them of the great responsibility every follower of Christ has, to do the best with the skills and talents God has provided. Even if Paul wasn’t the strongest or the best, he was still determined to give all that he had in service to Jesus Christ.

This week, as you read God’s word, be inspired to give your all to the service of the One who gave His all for you.

September 3/4: 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:16

What does Paul say about the correlation between adversity and spiritual growth? How should you respond when someone points out a “wrong” in your life? What do you need to do this week to take steps toward godly living?

September 5: 2 Corinthians 8:1-15

How does Christ’s example motivate you to give? How can joy lead to generosity, even when a person lives in poverty? In what ways, besides giving money, can you be generous to others this week?

September 6/7: 2 Corinthians 8:16-9:15

What do these passages say about God’s preferences between a cheerful giver and someone who gives grudgingly? Why does giving in a grudging manner make any difference if the need is being met? What could a reluctant giver do to become a more cheerful giver? What is one way you can set an example of cheerful giving?

September 8: 2 Corinthians 10:1-18

In what ways did Jesus exemplify meekness and gentleness? Where do you tend to make snap judgments based on what you see on the surface? In what ways have you been misled by those snap judgments in the past? What is one specific way you can exemplify the meekness and gentleness of Christ this week?

September 9: 2 Corinthians 11:1-15

According to these passages, how did Paul’s behavior contrast with that of his opponents and critics? How did Paul respond? In which areas of your life do you receive criticism for living out Christian values and principles? How do you typically respond?

Looking for opportunities to make an impact this summer?

Here are a few ideas...

- Nursing homes are always looking for families to come in and spend time with their residents.
- Write out thank you notes and drop them off to our police and fire departments.
- Write thank you notes for those currently serving in our military. (Drop these off at the info desk at your campus and we’ll mail them for you!)
- Do yardwork or household chores for an elderly couple in need.
- Serve your own family by doing their chores and/or helping them with an extra task.