
Joy

- Introduction: The connection between grace and joy
 - The verb form of the greek word used 72 times in the new testament for joy, is closely related to the greek work for grace. Vine defines grace as “that which bestows or occasions pleasure, delight or causes favorable regard”. Therefore grace is what produces joy.
 - One’s joy is directly proportional to the grace one has received, or at least to the perception of grace that one has received
 - Receive a small gift, and your joy might be minimal; Receive a large gift, and your joyous reaction is greater
 - When Christians don’t have much joy in their lives, something is wrong: “If you have no joy in your religion, there’s a leak in your Christianity somewhere.”
 - Someone gave this explanation as to why Christians may be joyless: “The reason why many poor souls have so little heat of joy in their hearts, is that they have so little light of Gospel knowledge in their mind. The further a soul stands from the light of truth, the further he must needs be from the heat of comfort.”
 - The joy of the lord is abiding
 - John 15:11
 - 1 Peter 1:6-8
 - Unlike the “passing pleasures of sin” (Heb. 11:25) which are fleeting
 - Even the good things in life eventually prove to be “vanity”
- Where does it come from?
 - It is a consequence of faith
 - Philippians 1:25
 - Without faith in God and Christ, we cannot experience abiding joy
 - Why is faith essential to joy? It dispels the attitudes that prevent joy from occurring, Such as worry (cf. Mt 6:25-30), doubt and fear.
 - Since joy is based upon faith, this emphasizes the importance of the Word of God in producing joy...

- Romans 10:17
- The Word of God produces faith
- Romans 15:13
- John 17:13
- Joy is also the result of obedience
 - Obedience to the Word of God fosters joy in the hearts of the obedient
 - Notice the conversion of the Samaritans ... Acts 8:5-8
 - Also, the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch — Acts 8:35-39
 - Conversely, disobedience dispels joy and produces fear! ... Hebrews 10:26-27
 - Could lack of joy be an indication of lack of obedience on your part?
- Joy is based upon forgiveness
 - The guilt of sin is a major reason why many people lack joy
 - Awareness of such guilt causes stress, unhappiness, and worry
 - Even as Paul illustrated in describing the condition of one struggling with the problem of sin ... Romans 7:22-24
 - But where there is forgiveness, there can be joy!
 - Consider the 32nd Psalm of David
 - He introduces his theme by speaking of the “blessedness” (or joy) of one whose sins are forgiven ... Psalm 32:1-2
 - He describes how the guilt of his sin affected him inwardly ... Psalm 32:3-4
 - But at last he confessed his sin and was forgiven ... Psalm 32:5
 - He describes the joy that the righteous (i.e., the forgiven) can experience ... Psalm 32:10-11
- Today, those in Christ can enjoy forgiveness of sins and the joy that follows ... Romans 5:10-11
- If you have not yet received the forgiveness found only in Christ, there is no way to experience the abiding joy that comes only “in the Lord”

- What does it produce?
 - Cheerfulness in conversation
 - Regardless of circumstances, when we are under pressure, stress, burden, abuse. Such as Paul in Acts 16. He was beaten and imprisoned after casting a demon from a slave girl. Instead of being in despair, whining, complaining, or acting out, Paul and Silas sang hymns. Wait, what? Their joy wasn't circumstantial it was spiritual.
 - Philippians 4:4
 - Constant delight in God
 - Delight in worship
 - Psalm 122:1
 - Colossians 3:16
 - Delight in fellowship
 - Philemon 7
 - Philippians 4:10
 - 2 John 12
 - Delight in service
 - There is the joy of spreading the gospel
 - Romans 16:19
 - 3 John 4
 - All those who are willing to become involved in serving the Lord, whether it be through teaching or the giving of one's time, energy or money, will experience joy from such service!
 - The wonderful joy of the Lord is open to all who would receive it
 - But it doesn't come thru worldly pursuits or desires
 - Rooted in faith, obedience and forgiveness
 - Against such there is no end!