



Grow More in '24

# Should I Always Be Joyful?

**1 Thessalonians 5:16**  
Sunday 21st January 2024  
www.leicesterchurch.uk

## Real Joy

Is it realistic to always be Joyful? | Are there any benefits to being grumpy?

1 Thessalonians 5:16 - 'Be **Joyful** always.' Why is it a command?

Luke 10:20 - Jesus said: '**Rejoice** because your names are written in heaven'

- Joy is the default condition based upon an unchanging, eternal reality
- Happiness is fleeting and is dependent upon changing circumstances
- Remember your baptism (**Joy** of finding treasure in a field) - Matt 13:44

Hebrews 12: 2-3 - For the **joy** set before him Jesus endured the cross of shame

- Obedience to the Father and to redeem many children for God's glory

2 Corinthians 8:2 - The Macedonian church was **joyful** and generous under trial

Hebrews 10:34 - The Hebrew disciples **joyfully** accepted persecution

3 John 1:4 - John's great **joy**: my children are walking in the truth

## Thieves of Joy - Acts 14:17 | Anxieties can weigh down the human heart

Unrepentant sin, guilt, bitterness, resentment, not getting what you want, addiction (e.g. drugs, alcohol, pornography, gambling, overeating), chronic pain and illness, grief and bereavement, disagreements (family, friends, colleagues and neighbours), disunity and discord, loneliness and isolation, unemployment, unforgiveness, arguments, envy and jealousy, comparing ourselves to others, past regrets, fear and worry, debt, abuse, being bullied, rejection, broken relationships, online content and bad news, bad memories, disappointments and unfulfilled expectations, betrayal, stress and overwork, too many possessions, a lack of sleep, hunger, unresolved conflict, discouragement, gossip and slander, etc...

## Where can Joy be found?

- Galatians 5:22 - **Joy** is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, a gift
- The Christian community should be a place of **Joy**
- **Joy** is the response of receiving something we love, doing something we love, or being in the presence of someone we love
- **Joy** can also be learnt, we can grow in Joy as we grow in Christ:

## The practise of Joy

1. Keep your hearts set on Christ
  - Romans 8:39 - Nothing can separate us from Christ's love
2. Practise gratitude:
  - Count your blessings
  - Acknowledge God as the true gift giver
  - Use your gifts well
3. Make music and sing:
  - Colossians 3:16 - Teach and admonish **one another** with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.
  - Ephesians 5:19-20 - Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart **to the Lord** (e.g. in worship)
4. Develop deeper relationships within the fellowship:
  - Strangers < Acquaintances < Friends < Brothers
  - Help each other to tackle the 'Thieves of Joy' in life
  - Philemon 1:7 - 'Your love has given me great **joy** and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people'.
  - Showing kindness to others in return brings you **Joy**
  - Spend time with **Joyful** people, avoid Joy stealers
5. Practise mindfulness:
  - Don't take ourselves so seriously all the time
  - Forget what is behind, we can't change the past
  - Remember: We can't control everything in life
  - Laugh a little!