

## A Definition of Joy

### Scripture Reading — Galatians 5:13-26

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. — Galatians 5:22-23*

I spend a lot of time with teenagers. I also spend time trying to figure out the words they're using sometimes, because teens like to give words new meanings and even come up with new words.

I like wondering what lies at the heart of a word. When I started to think about the word *joy*, I looked it up in the dictionary. The general definition of *joy* was listed as “an emotion evoked by well-being or success.” So we can feel joy when we have good times with people we love, when we appreciate art or view some breathtaking scenery, when we accomplish something challenging, and more.

But where does joy fit in when situations are not happy, beautiful, or successful? Is joy just a happy response to good times?

Biblical joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, the evidence of God's love growing in us. For a believer in Jesus Christ, joy is more than a fleeting response to happy times. Joy is cultivated, pruned, and harvested throughout all the seasons and circumstances of our lives. Jesus laid the foundation of joy when he freed us from sin, with all its pain and suffering, and made new life possible for us. Joy in Christ's success lies at the heart of who we are in Christ. This is the joy we claim. This is the joy we cultivate!

### Prayer

*Lord, joy is a gift you offer us through your death and resurrection. Continue to grow the gift of joy in us so your fruit is evident in our lives. In the peace, love, and joy of Christ we pray. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Christianity](#), [Doctrine](#), [New Life](#), [God](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Life](#), [Emotions](#), [Joy](#)

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*Printed on August 8, 2020*

