

# FirstFruits Gathering At Harvest Christian Church

## Joy

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Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year. Celebrations, gathering with family and friends, special lights, Christmas carols, gift giving and each of those events is marked by JOY. JOY includes feelings of pleasure; it touches your heart – it is an inner feeling that brings delight and fullness. JOY is part of Christmas. Christmas cards are filled with expressions of great JOY. People decorate with the word JOY. JOY is the expression of fulfillment that our Savior has been born. That Jesus, our Messiah, has indeed come into the earth to redeem mankind and to make our life complete. Christmas is synonymous with JOY. JOY is a feeling of good pleasure and happiness that is dependent upon who Jesus is rather than on who we are or what is happening around us. JOY comes from the Holy Spirit, abiding in God's presence and from hope in His promises. JOY surrounds the birth of Christ. John the Baptist leaps for joy in his mother's womb and the angels proclaim good news of great joy has come into the earth after Jesus is born.

The Bible says that when you believe in Jesus that you ARE FILLED with an inexpressible and glorious JOY! And this JOY does not diminish or leave you. JOY is filled with hope and promise that is eternal. JOY gives vision and shape to a prosperous future. JOY brings health into our bones and turns mourning into dancing. JOY fills the heart to such an extent that our heart overflows with thankfulness and gratitude – our cup runs over.

The Bible says that our JOY is made complete in Christ. Being filled with JOY is part of Christian life. JOY is part of the government of God. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of **righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit** (Romans 14.7). **The joy of the Lord is our strength** (Nehemiah 8.10). Filling weak? Tired? Stressed? Be filled with JOY. JOY is tangible – you can feel it inside – it pulsates in your heart and penetrates every part of your soul. JOY has a sound and a frequency. JOY is a vibration that energizes. It lifts you up and over obstacles. Looking for breakthrough? Be filled with JOY. JOY breaks through oppression, depression, anger, hopelessness and every negative narrative that comes from darkness. JOY is filled with light and in the light, you can see the possibilities and the fulfillment of dreams and desires. In JOY you connect to your future. Psalm 16.11, You make known to me the path of life; **you will fill me with joy in your presence**, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. Romans 15.13, **May the God of hope fill you with all joy** and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Jesus shares a key to JOY in John 15.11** Jesus says, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." Wow! So, what did Jesus tell His disciples that would fill them with ecstatic joy and wonder? Jesus told them I am the true vine, and you are the branches. Remain in Me and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. Jesus goes on to say, if you remain in Me and My words remain in you ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you. This is to My father's glory, that you bear much fruit showing yourself to be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, so I loved you. Now remain in My love.

Jesus GIVES us His JOY!! How? Through being united with Him. The key is UNION. He is the vine, and we are the branches. His JOY flows into us through this intimate connection. And His JOY makes our JOY complete or full. Picture yourself as a branch on the vine of Jesus – allow His JOY to flow into your heart in the most organic and natural way. Let JOY penetrate your bones; go into every cell of your body. Let JOY fill your thoughts and your emotions. See through the lens of JOY. Breathe in JOY that is inexpressible in words but filled with God’s glory, His beauty and His love. Linger in His JOY and let JOY strengthen your very inner being.

Jesus is the personification of JOY. It has always been the plan of God that His sons and daughters would be filled with JOY. When God created man, He put him in the Garden of Eden. The word Eden comes from a root word meaning pleasure. Our father wants us to be filled with JOY. JOY fills us and feeds us; it nourishes and satisfies bringing strength and health to our physical bodies and our soul. JOY is filled with life. JOY is the gift of God and His gift to us – receive the JOY of God.

### **Psalm 16.8-9** TPT

<sup>8</sup> Because I set you, Yahweh, always close to me, **my confidence will never be weakened**, for I experience your wraparound presence every moment. <sup>9</sup> **My heart and soul explode with joy**—full of glory! Even my body will rest confident and secure.

### **Psalm 34.5** TPT

<sup>5</sup> Gaze upon him, **join your life with his, and joy will come.** Your faces will glisten with glory.

### **2 Corinthians 13.14** TPT

<sup>14</sup> Now, **may the grace and joyous favor of the Lord Jesus Christ, the unambiguous love of God, and the precious communion that we share in the Holy Spirit be yours continually.** Amen!

### **1 Peter 1.8** TPT

<sup>8</sup> You love him passionately although you have not seen him, but through believing in him you are **saturated with an ecstatic joy**, indescribably sublime and immersed in glory.

### **PRAYER:**

We thank You Father for Your faithfulness and love – you fill us with life-giving JOY. You set a table before us in the presence of our enemies. You anoint us with the oil of JOY and indeed our cup overflows.

We release the JOY of the Lord over Detroit and over our nation. We say to every heart and every household that the JOY of the Lord is your strength; be strengthened in JOY as you get ready to go into 2022. Nothing is impossible with God.

We declare that our God reigns! As it says in the book of Daniel, so we declare over this time and season:

Thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His clothing was white as snow, His hair of His head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before Him. Thousands upon thousands attend Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

From Your righteous throne, God, justice will come. And in Your justice JOY will breakout in our city and in our land. The earth is Yours and the nations are Yours. You are the Living God, and Your kingdom will not be destroyed. Of Your peace and Your government there will be no end.

The blessing that rests on the righteous releases strength and favor to the entire city and every community and sphere of influence. **And shouts of JOY will be heard in the streets** as justice and freedom prevail in our land.