



The JOY of Jesus

Week 14 | September 2, 2024

The Enemy HATES our **joy**. He knows that it is meant to be a *trademark* of all Christians' lives and that in it lies our strength. ([Philippians 4:4](#); [Nehemiah 8:10](#))

Because Satan **thrives** in times and locations that Christ's followers *are weak*, he has perfected the art of attacking this essential fruit of the Spirit. As we pray for the **strength**, **protection**, and **restoration** of our brothers' and sisters' joy this week, we must *counterattack* all of our enemies' strategies that include:

1. **DISCOURAGEMENT** ([John 10:10](#))

- a. **NOTE:** Whether it be through various *trials and tribulations* or simply by our **unmet expectations**, discouragement is a primary tool of the Evil one to steal away our joy. While these attacks might come in many *different shapes and sizes*, our God is more than able to **encourage** and **inspire** in every circumstance when we turn to Him! ([James 1:2](#); [Psalm 42:5](#))
 - i. **For Ex.** "Lord God, thank You for the tremendous **gift of joy** You have given us *through Christ Jesus*. I ask that today You would protect this treasure from all attacks of discouragement, teaching us to **look to You** in *every situation* and in *all circumstances*. Fix our eyes on Jesus, reminding us of everything He **has done, is doing, and will do** in the future. Strengthen our *faith*, reinforce our *hope*, and adjust our *perspective* so that we can see, hear, and respond to You."
 1. **REMEMBER:** The counter of discouragement is HOPE, and our *hope in Jesus* results in **immense joy**. ([Romans 12:12](#); [Hebrews 12:2](#))

2. **DECEPTION** ([Revelation 12:9](#); [John 8:44](#))

- a. **NOTE:** Scripture tells us that our Enemy is **a liar** at his core. When we *believe his lies* about ourselves, others, or God we will quickly find that our joy has dwindled. Thankfully, we serve **a God of truth** and He has sent the Holy Spirit to *lead us into it*. Pray that we are filled to the brim with Him so that we might be **set free** to *experience the joy* that Jesus came to give. ([John 16:13](#); [Galatians 5:22](#); [Luke 2:10](#))
 - i. **For Ex.** "Father God, thank You for the wonderful gift of **the Holy Spirit** who is our *counselor, guide, and source of power* in this life. Please fill us afresh, giving us a holy **discernment** to *identify the lies* of the Evil one. Instead, please **lead us** into *Your truth* that results in freedom and unleash Your **powerful joy** into our lives. Through Your *amazing power* within us, may we produce all of the fruits of Your Spirit for the **honor and glory** of Your name."
 1. **REMEMBER:** The counter of deception is TRUTH, and the *truth of Jesus* leads to **abundant joy**. ([John 15:11](#))

3. **DILUTION** (2 Corinthians 11:3)

- a. **NOTE:** If he cannot **steal** away our joy through *discouragement* or **kill** it through *deception*, Satan will attempt to **destroy** our joy through its *dilution*. This happens whenever the purity of joy is compromised by the addition of another substance. This **corruption** occurs most often whenever *the gift* becomes the object of our pursuit instead of the giver Himself. Anytime believers **idolize** their *happiness* or the happiness of others over obedience to God, we **invite destruction** into our lives.

(Proverbs 21:17; Luke 8:14; Exodus 20:3)

- i. **For Ex.** “Lord God, thank You for all of the **amazing gifts** You have given us *through Your grace*. Guard us from anything and everything that might **pollute** this *holy joy* that You have blessed us with and make known to us any blind spots of **impure motives** we might have. Destroy every *toehold, foothold, and stronghold* of idolatry in our hearts so that we might worship You alone, **the source** of every *good thing* in our lives. Cleanse us by the power of Your blood, Lord Jesus, so that every **attitude, thought, and action** might be *made pure*.”

1. **REMEMBER:** The counter of dilution is PURITY, and our *purification through Jesus* gives us **great joy**. (Romans 14:17; Acts 8:7-8)

Questions for Reflection:

- What **unmet expectations** in your life have been *used as tools* for your discouragement?
 - Surrender them to God. Only He is **worthy** and **capable** of handling *your expectancy*.
- What **lies** have you believed about *yourself, your community, or your God*?
 - Once identified, **reject** and **replace** them with *what God* says about you, others, and Himself through His word.
- Has your joy become **diluted** by *idolatry*?
 - Correct your priorities. Anything that is sought **above** or **before** God must be *surrendered* in order to experience all that He has in store for you.