

# What's Joy Like in the Kingdom?

First, some questions:

1. Was Jesus a happy person?
2. How did he display this?
3. What is your Bible verse to justify your answer?
4. Did Jesus have joy?
5. How did he display this?
6. What is your Bible verse to justify your answer?

Simple questions, but they go to the heart of understanding what joy really looks like.

We know that Jesus cried<sup>1</sup> because it's recorded in the Gospels. However, there's no record that he was either happy or joyful.

Another question: When you enjoy something, what is that like?

'Enjoy' means to be 'in a state of joy'. When you're enjoying something, are you always happy? Are you always outrageously, visibly full of mirth so that it almost annoys others?

You see, there's a range of situations where we can have enjoyment – from quiet joy while crocheting, to extreme joy, like watching the footy grand final.

I enjoy ploughing. That's sitting on a tractor for a 12-hour shift going round and round in circles. You won't see any happiness while I'm doing it, but I'm enjoying myself.

Here's the thing: Kingdom joy comes from the King. This joy of the Lord is a strength to us.<sup>2</sup> Notice it's not joy *in* the Lord, it's from him.

When I was in the Pentecostal system I was told that I had to be enthusiastic so that everyone would know I was full of the Spirit. The reasoning was that 'enthusiasm' comes from the Greek word ἐνθεος (*entheos*), meaning 'in God' or 'possessed by God'. This is why the pastor would go into a side room before preaching to 'gee' himself up and come out jumping and fully 'pumped'. This was all the soul and emotion, not the joy of the Lord.

Jesus said, "Enter into the joy of your lord"<sup>3</sup>. This again is not about the soul.

In reality, joy is a fruit of the Spirit.<sup>4</sup> It comes from him<sup>5</sup>, not from our soul.

Jesus was full of the Spirit.<sup>6</sup> However, there's no account in the Gospels of him being happy, joyous, dancing, or enthusiastic. How come? The joy from the Spirit, which Jesus must have had, being full of the Spirit, must be something internal.

It is recorded that Jesus had other spiritual fruit:

- He loved.<sup>7</sup>
- He had compassion.<sup>8</sup>
- He was long-suffering.<sup>9</sup>

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1 – John 11:35, Luke 19:41

2 – Nehemiah 8:10

3 – Matthew 25:21, 23

4 – Galatians 5:22-23 (love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness/gentleness, self-control)

5 – 1 Thessalonians 1:6

6 – Luke 4:1

7 – John 11:5; 20:2; Mark 10:21 (John 13:23)

8 – Matthew 9:36; 14:14

9 – Matthew 17:17

In the Kingdom, the joy available to us comes from the throne of the King inside us. This is the seat of the Internal Kingdom. This joy remains no matter what our situations are, if and only if, we give the Spirit full reign in our lives. If we also don't trust or rest in the ability of Father to order our lives, then fear, negativity, criticism, cynicism, and difficult circumstances will rob us of this joy. We have been given autonomy by our Creator, so we have control over our beings. This means we are free and able to quash the Spirit's work in us – including all the joy that's freely available to us.

I'm learning to draw everything from the Internal Kingdom. All my supply is beginning to come from there – living water, living bread, joy, peace, love, and all my resources. You try it.

**BTW:** Did Jesus ever get angry? It's not recorded as such. It's our interpretation that he did when he cleared the temple<sup>10</sup> and it's our interpretation that his response to the religious leaders<sup>11</sup> was full of anger. (Actually, according to one Jewish teacher<sup>12</sup>, what Jesus said to them was similar to the way our politicians tear into each other in parliament – it was a rabbinical style for arguing.)

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10 – Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46 (No mention of anger here)

11 – Matthew 12:34; 23:13-30

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