



FINDING JOY

Do you find joy easily and abundantly? Or are there obstacles standing in your way today as you pursue joy? The message and the music of Body & Soul's **Finding Joy** session will empower you to express your joy, seek true joy in Jesus, and overcome obstacles that can steal your joy. Our session verse is Nehemiah 8:10b – **“The joy of the Lord is your strength”**.

Be inspired as we explore the following themes:

- Find Joy in the Journey
- Sing & Shout for Joy
- When Joy is Hard to Find
- Experience the Power of Joy
- True Joy

It is with great joy that we share this session of joy and praise with you!

BLESSINGS,

Amy & Jeannie

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The Joy	The Neverclaim
Joy (live)	Planetshakers
Run Devil Run	Crowder
Joy	Jonny Diaz
You Found Me	MercyMe
If I Don't Have Love	V. Rose
Happy Dance	MercyMe
Time of My Life	The Afters
20/20	Group 1 Crew
Power	Group 1 Crew
All My Love	Hollyn
Fearless	Jasmine Murray
123 Praise! [feat. T.Bone]	Virtue
Magnify	We Are Messengers
Brand New Fire	Matty Mullins
The Cure	Unspoken
Take it All In	Group 1 Crew
Phenomenal	Group 1 Crew
Worry	Blanca
Giants Fall	Francesca Battistelli
Can't Live Without	Hollyn
Open Hands	Urban Rescue
Pioneer	Beckah Shae
Joy	Beckah Shae
Dance (Live)	Planetshakers
El Culto Esta Bueno	Giovanni
Get Down Get Down	KJ52
In the Water	Gawvi
Kaleidoscope	Urban Rescue
Mapapiro	Tembalami & Friends

FIND JOY IN THE UPS AND DOWNS

"You've turned it all around. Where I was hurting now I'm rejoicing. You turned my mourning into dancing. You've turned my sadness into gladness and my sorrow into joy." These are the lyrics we hear Planetshakers sing in their song titled *Joy*, and these words remind us that without contrast, we would not experience the difference between joy and sorrow, or light and darkness. Finding joy in the journey of life, means experiencing high moments, low moments, and everything in between. Journey is defined as the act of traveling from one place to another. Journey implies movement, progress, pilgrimage. Life is an adventure of highs and lows, yet if we allow ourselves, joy can be found in both. Scripture tells us that *"gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away."*¹ This is God's promise to us. Finding joy in the journey requires a heart that is thankful and open to our Creator, believing that His plans for us are good. *"Let the celebration begin. Make a joyful noise unto Him. Let's give Him praise for He is good."*²

Isaiah 35:10¹ Psalm 30:5²



FINDING JOY IN THE JOURNEY

One of the best ways to find ongoing joy in your life is to follow the advice of *Take it All In* by Group 1 Crew: *“Take it all in—breathe in the moments that take your breath away. Taste and see what the Maker’s made...every new day is a gift.”* Some days hold obvious breath-taking moments—holidays, weddings, the birth of a newborn—it’s easy to find joy in the celebration of these moments. But this song reminds us to look for **daily moments of beauty, intimacy, and adventure** that could pass us by if we allow the busy-ness and stress of daily life to take charge. **Beauty**— start your day by letting the sunshine hit your face. Whether it is at dawn with the sunrise, or later sipping a cup of coffee, just take in a moment with God, as your day begins, remembering that he is the Maker of your day and he will be with you each moment of it. **Intimacy**— look for moments to share a hug and don’t hurry past them. Look your loved ones in the eye and send words of encouragement their way. Hold hands, cuddle with your little ones, and give the gift of a loving touch— you will receive the gift back as you give it away! **Adventure**— embrace the surprise of the unknown in your day— if you can turn the unexpected “interruptions” into adventure, you will find joy even in the most hectic of seasons.

“...the Lord made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and joy are in his dwelling place.” | Chr 16:26b, 27

IT'S TIME FOR A PRAISE PARTY

Praise is our reasonable response to God, who gives us every reason to rejoice. He blesses us with good things: family, community, life, beauty, opportunity, forgiveness, and so much more. Even *"the mountains and hills will burst into song...and all the trees of the field will clap their hands."*¹ **"It's time for a praise party"**, sings Virtue, in their song *123 Praise!* *"Everybody tell somebody...lift your hands, clap your hands, give Him glory, and get your praise on!"* When's the last time you got your praise on – where you belted out a praise song with no concern over who could hear, or threw your hands up high in worship, or shouted to God with cries of joy?

Exploding in praise is how this is described in Beckah Shae's song *Joy*. She sings *"leaving behind all my concerns 'cause I'm free in your peace. I run to You and You fill me with joy."* May the pressure within us build up until it cannot be contained and we **explode into praise**. Friends, **it's time for a praise party!**

Dig Deeper:

Read Isaiah 55:12¹, Psalm 126:3 and Psalm 100:1





DO A HAPPY DANCE - SING AND SHOUT FOR JOY!

Did you know that the Bible exhorts us to sing and shout for joy? Psalm 66:1-2 says this: *“Shout for joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious.”* There are times to be quiet, and keep our voice low, but when we are praising God, we have the freedom and joy of singing and shouting with gusto. We can sing with our whole heart— not half heartedly. We can sing whether we are naturally gifted singers or whether we can barely carry a tune. God does not judge our singing ability— he hears our heart. And don’t ever forget the reason for your joy— MercyMe says it this way in their song *Happy Dance*: *“We’ve got reason to get up, reason to get down. He done traded our sin for joy, and now that joy wants out— happy dance.”* Now, THAT is a reason to sing and shout! The next time your favorite song comes on in Body & Soul, do a happy dance, and don’t be afraid to sing and shout as you move those dancing feet!

CALLING ALL CONQUERORS

Many things threaten to steal our joy in this life – worry, anxiety, busyness, stress, and fear, just to name a few. These threats can sneak in when we least expect them and become obstacles to our joy. It can happen slowly without much notice, or it can happen quickly, taking us by surprise. Either way, we are called to be **“more than conquerors”**¹ in this life, and we are promised in John 15 that our joy is to be complete. Complete means “to the greatest extent or degree; total”. Is your joy complete, or is something stealing it from you that you need to fight? Let’s make fear our target today and, with God’s help, conquer that obstacle. Rebuke fear and sing along with Jasmine Murray in *Fearless*: *“in Your name, in Your strength, I’m more than a conqueror. I’m gonna be fearless because I believe You’re with me.”* Proclaim the truth of 2 Tim 1:7 that tells us that **we aren’t given a spirit of fear**, but one of power and love and self-control. *Be fearless. No holding back, no backing down.* Be the conqueror He created you to be, letting Him conquer your fears and other obstacles to joy. You set me free, God, *I’m gonna be fearless!*

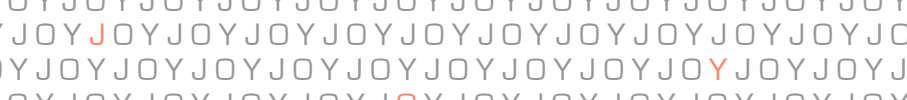
Romans 8:37¹



HELP OTHERS FIND THEIR JOY

“I’ve got joy down in my soul, I’m gonna take it everywhere I go. Not gonna worry ‘bout what I don’t know. I’ll be alright as long as I’ve got joy.” —Joy by Jonny Diaz

When your joy is hard to find, there is an antidote that may seem strange to you—instead of trying to create your own joy in the midst of trial and pain, take your eyes off yourself and **set your heart on creating some joy for someone else**. Since you are dealing with your own challenges, keep it simple. You’re cooking dinner anyway, so make a family favorite that you haven’t cooked in a long time— a simple one, to surprise the whole crew. Or what about going on a “date” with one of your children, doing exactly what he or she wants to do— even if it is just going out to a favorite park to play together. Or what about getting a favorite treat and then spend time together talking while eating it. Somewhere in the middle of whatever you do, as you carry it out, an amazing result happens— God fills your heart with joy as you gaze on the smiles you create and receive words of appreciation. And all the while, you are following the advice in Philippians *“Make my **joy** complete...in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others.”* (Philippians 2: 2a, 3b, 4)



TIME TO MAKE AN EYE APPOINTMENT

Are you near-sighted or do you wear reading glasses for the small print? Or perhaps you are someone who has been given the gift of 20/20 vision. But if you've ever struggled to see clearly, with or without corrective lenses, you know the frustration is real. Group 1 Crew sings a song called 20/20, and in that song, they proclaim the need for *"faith to see what you see. I know that your love redeems, you'll finish the work in me. I am made perfectly in your eyes."* Music and God's Word are like corrective lenses. They can help us refocus and gain better perspective, bringing joy in place of frustration. They can also be a source of great power for us when we believe. In Psalm 139 we are told that we are *"fearfully and wonderfully made"*. If you find this hard to believe, it may be time to have your vision checked. God's vision is perfect and His perspective is the best perspective. Allow God's Word to settle deep into your heart, take it personally, and let it bring powerful joy to your life. Believe what God says about you today and embrace the power of His Word. You will find that it clears your vision and gives you the proper perspective.



THE POWER OF JOY

When you are feeling like you need to be powered up, what do you do? Does real power come from an energy drink or a shot of espresso? This may help you stay awake while driving, but it is not the source of joy-giving power. The joy of the Lord is your true strength [Nehemiah 8:10], and it is the power of the Holy Spirit living in you that gives you power to face whatever challenges life brings. Group 1 Crew says it this way in their song *Power*: “so put your hands up, if you want it, you can have it tonight. Just lose yourself, and let the Spirit take you over tonight. I want that power.” The disciples received that Holy Spirit power, as recorded in Acts 1:8: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” And in that power they went forth with great joy and shared the good news of Jesus. When you understand that good news and say yes to Jesus as your Savior, you too will have Holy Spirit power and great joy!



FINDING TRUE JOY



True joy comes in being found. Have you ever heard the panic in the voice of a parent calling for a child who has wandered out of sight at a public park? Or the cry of a child who is frantically calling out to a parent whom they can't see from the sandbox at the crowded playground? You most likely have a vivid picture in your mind and an emotional feeling rising in your chest right now. Many people have experienced this, and thankfully many have experienced the joy when their loved one is found. The intense feelings that go along with being lost, drive us to search for those we love. In the song *You Found Me*, *MercyMe* sings about hiding like a child when *"I heard your voice calling out to me."* Their song is the story of salvation – when we were lost and God called out to us. *"I am yours, and you are mine. You will never have to hide."* This is the power of being found, and leads to great joy. Jesus is our **true joy**. Jeremiah 29:13 promises that *"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."* Seek Jesus and find **true joy** today – then rejoice in being found!














THE SOURCE OF TRUE JOY



Happiness is fleeting and elusive, but joy is deep, and here's the secret— **true joy is found in God alone**. In Psalm 16:11 it says this about God: *“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.”* The One who makes known the path of life is the one who is the source of **eternal joy**. If we believe in him and receive him as our Savior, he welcomes us into his family and fills us with true joy, He heals our broken heart and broken spirit. He forgives all we have done wrong. He truly is “the cure” for the brokenness in our heart and the brokenness in this world. The song *The Cure* by Unspoken speaks about who God is with these words: *“You are the cure! Everybody's searching for it. Everybody's reaching out, trying to grab hold of something real. You are the cure! Only You can satisfy us, fill up the void inside us. Never been a heart You couldn't heal.”* Are you searching for a cure for your discontentedness or discouragement? Are you reaching for joy, wanting to leave sadness behind? God is the cure; He will fill you with joy in his presence. Seek his face today!





HOW TO FIND TRUE JOY

Are you living with joy today or are you feeling that joy is hard to find? Joy can be elusive– it seems to come and go and sometimes you have to fight hard to “find it.” But there is a deep abiding joy that can be found in God alone. When you trust in him, and allow him to take control of your life, there is a peace and joy that takes hold inside of you, and it will always be there, no matter what life-circumstances swirl around you.

The Bible says that the joy of the Lord will be your strength. [Nehemiah 8:10] If you are in a place where you feel like you have no strength of your own, and your joy is fleeting, you can make the decision now to look to the Lord for true joy.

Take a step of faith to ask God to take control of your life, and allow him to guide you to a new life of true joy.

Admit your faults and mistakes– things that have made you feel unworthy of his love. His love reaches out to you, just as you are.

Accept God’s grace and forgiveness. He offers this grace to you in a supernatural way. He does not ask you to earn it. He knows you don’t deserve it; He offers it as a free gift.

You can be assured of this supernatural grace if you put your faith in God and allow him to take control of your life. He loves you so much that he sent his son to cover your mistakes and open the door to everlasting life. God's son Jesus bridges the gap between you and God. Choose, by faith, to believe that Jesus is the only way to ensure your eternal life in heaven. Once you have made this decision, your new life will start and you will begin to experience the joy of the Lord, even in hard times.

Ephesians 2:8-9 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith— and it is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works so that no one can boast."

1 John 4:9,10 "This is how God showed his love among us: he sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

The following is a suggested prayer:

Dear God, I am taking the step of faith to believe in you. I open the door of my heart and accept you as my Lord and Savior. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me life that is everlasting. Take control of my life. Make me the person you want me to be. Thank you for your grace and your supernatural joy.



where faith and fitness meet

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