

Ezra 6, "The Temple: Finished & Dedicated" 5/28/23

Introduction: Scriptures About Joy:

- Dt. 12:7 "**There** you shall come...eat before the Lord your God, & rejoice... Dt. 28:47-48, "You did **not** serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things..."
- Ps. 5:11, "Let all who take refuge in You rejoice; let them ever sing for joy..."
- Ps. 32:11, "Be glad in the Lord and rejoice O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!"
- Lk 10:21, "In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven & earth, that You have **hidden** these things from the wise & understanding & revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was Your gracious will."
- Jn. 15:11, "These things I have spoken to you, that **my joy** may be in you, & that your joy may be full."
- Acts 5:40-41, "[W]hen they had called in the apostles, they beat them & charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name."
- Ph. 3:1, "Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me & is safe for you." **ἀσφαλής**: A "not" & sphallō, "totter, cast down." Safe, trustworthy.

Ezra 6:10, What about for us believers living under the New Covenant—Don't we sacrifice?

- No. 1 Cor. 5:7, "Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed." OT symbols.
- Yes! Rom. 12:1, "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice..." (Plans, desires)

Conclusion: 13 biblical ways to deal with lack of joy (**not** exhaustive)

1. Pray to the Lord about it. Ps. 50:15, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." Recognize that joy is **a GIFT** of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22.
2. Read the Word, focusing on the promises of God. Ph. 4:19, My God will supply every NEED of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." Rom. 8:28, Jer. 29:11, Pr. 12:25, "Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad."
3. Confess your sins. Ps. 32:1, 3, "Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven ... when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all the day long."

4. Be thankful for **all** things. Eph. 5:20, “[G]iving thanks always & for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
5. Deal with the past...
 - The good ol’ days? Ecc. 7:10, “Do not say, ‘Why were the former days better than these?’ For it is not from wisdom that you ask this.”
 - The sins of the past: If they humble you, remember them; if they paralyze you, forget them—you have been forgiven of all your sins! (Piper).
6. Think about what God tells you to think about. Ph. 4:8, “Finally, brothers, whatever is **true**, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” (“**In Christ**”)
7. Talk to yourself. Ps. 42:5, “Why are you downcast O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God for I will yet praise Him, my Savior & my God...”
8. Spend time with God’s people. Heb. 10:24-25, “Let us consider how to stir up one another to love & good deeds, not forsaking our assembling together...”
9. Serve others. Acts 20:35, “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”
10. Exercise. 1 Tim. 4:8, “Physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life & the life to come.” 1 Cor. 6:19-20.
11. Get some sleep. Mt. 26:41, ““Watch & pray, that you may not enter into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, **but the flesh is weak.**”
12. Go out into God’s creation. Mt. 6:26-28, “[**L**ook at the birds of the air... Why do you worry about clothing? **Observe** how the lilies grow; they do not toil or spin, yet I say to you not even Solomon...” Ps. 8:3, ‘When I look at Your heavens, the work of Your fingers...’
13. Submit to God’s will. Lk. 10:21, “In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit & said I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven & earth, that You have **hidden** these things from the wise & understanding & revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was **Your** gracious will.”