

## Blossoming in Joy

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Start



Grow



Mature

### Information notice board

- 1) About me.** Before I became a devoted Christian, I spent 20 years of my life being a hedonist – one who seeks pleasure for the sake of it. I drunk alcohol alot, I was a professional DJ and loved the music – infact my nickname was “Wickie Dickie”. I had quite a number of girlfriends over the years and I lived for the fun of it because I didn’t care about God - To my career and life was going well! Since God humbled me to turn me into his servant and I got baptized in May 2017, he has now overhauled my life to live by the Holy Spirit rather than the Flesh. You can read my full testimony [here](#):
- 2) About these series.** The Lord Jesus gave me a single word “Blossom” as I was praying for a word for this season and series. This word will define a series of 12 topics he has also given me to tell his church about and build Christian character in his Holy Spirit. This lesson is one of those messages, but what does it mean to blossom?
- 3) Pray for us!** Without the Lord, our effort is in vain. Pray that we remain faithful, humble servants.
- 4) Subscribe to** our [YouTube Channel](#) and keep up with our videos which support the website.
- 5) Looking for a ministry to partner with (pray, volunteer, give, subscribe to)? Consider supporting:**  
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### This message covers

- An understanding of joy within the context of blossoming.
- The world view of Happiness/Joy vs. the Christian view.
- What lessons Jesus is teaching us about joy in the Holy Spirit.

## Part 1: Basics

What does it mean to blossom into joy? First let’s understand the word “Blossom”. It has various definitions as follows.

**blos·som**<sup>i</sup>

(blɒs’əm)

*n.*

- 1.** A flower or cluster of flowers.
- 2.** The [condition](#) or time of flowering: *peach trees in blossom.*
- 3.** A condition or period of maximum development.

*intr.v.* **blos·somed, blos·som·ing, blos·soms**

- a. To come into flower; bloom.
- b. To develop; flourish: *The child blossomed into a beauty.*

Think of an Orange tree (an example of a flowering tree). What are the stages of growth of before it starts bearing fruit? This summary can help you:<sup>ii</sup>

1. **Planting.** Seeds from the “parent stock” are planted in a pot.
2. **Sprouting.** The seeds sprout (little leaves or shoots appear). For the seeds to sprout, they will need to have been planted in soil (e.g. in a pot) and have access to loads of sunlight.
3. **Growing.** As the plant grows, loads of fertilizer and water will be needed as well as continued exposure to sunshine. It is typical to transfer the plant into the garden, having previously been in a pot.
4. **Blossoming.** It takes between 2 and 5 years for an orange tree to Blossom or bloom. Blossoming is the process of flowers to start appearing. **Blossoming is the stage before a tree starts bearing fruit.** Flower development takes a lot of energy from a plant and so before the blossoming, in winter countries, the orange tree enters a dormant phase in the winter (resting) to allow flower bud development to begin in spring. During this period, sunshine and water is critical. Blossoms emerge once warmer spring weather arrives.
5. **Pollination.** The blossoms (flowers) with their bright colours and intoxicating nectar attract pollinators like bees. Pollination is the process of transferring pollen from the female part to the male part to allow fertilisation to take place and hence enabling seeds to be produced. **Many blossoms fall from the tree before pollination. Up to 99 percent of these flowers fall off without ever resulting in the formation of fruit.**
6. **Fruit.** Once pollinated, it can take an orange tree anywhere from five to 18 months to produce viable fruit that is ready to be harvested.

The Word of God (the bible) is the Seed (see parable of the sower, Matthew 13: 1 – 23) and this is the starting point. Fruit grow from a Seed. You cannot grow or blossom without the Seed!

Jesus also said he is the vine and we are the branches and so we depend on him (John 15: 1-11) as our sunshine, our soil, our fertiliser and our living waters SO within this context - based on the word of the Lord, the stage of blossoming is an exciting stage, it's when flowers come. These flowers attract the pollinators and shortly thereafter fruit are produced, it is also a time to watch as 99% of flowers never get pollinated and so never result in formation of fruit.

This fruit – the fruit of the Holy Spirit manifests itself in a number of ways and one of them is Joy! The anchor verse on Joy as one of the manifestations of the fruit of the Holy Spirit is described as follows:

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, **joy**, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”*

Galatians 5: 22-25 (NKJV).

For a growing Christian, it is critical to consider that the fruit of the Spirit referenced in Galatians 5 is contrasted with the works of the flesh such as sexual immorality, lack of self-control, sorcery, jealousy, anger, factions and drunkenness which thrive in an environment of the world – under the control of Satan, the prince of this world. The fruit of the Spirit however grows in a climate blessed with an abundance of the Spirit and the Word [under the leadership of the Blessed, the Ancient of Days].

“Walking in the Spirit” involves you “keep in step” with the Spirit NOT Run ahead or LAG behind. This involves:

- The Word (reading the bible);
- Prayer;
- Worship;
- Praise; and
- Fellowship with God’s people.

It also means “pulling out the weeds” so that the seed of the Word can take root and bear fruit. <sup>iii</sup>

## Part 2: Our generation: The view on Happiness/Joy.

### The world view

In our generation today, many of us hold on to the view that Happiness is the ultimate goal of life and this comes from various “voices” which we have swallowed WHOLESALE, sometimes without even knowing the original source of these beliefs we hold. Examples of these voices are:<sup>iv</sup>

- **Buddhism.** Happiness is a CENTRAL theme of Buddhist teaching. Ultimate happiness is only achieved by overcoming craving (“tanha”) in all forms.
- **Hinduism.** In Advaita Vedanta, school of Hindu philosophy, the ultimate goal of life is happiness, in the sense that duality between Atman and Brahman is transcended and one realizes oneself to be the Self in all.
- **In Psychology** Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is a pyramid depicting the levels of human needs, psychological, and physical. When a human being ascends the steps of the pyramid, he reaches self-actualization. Beyond the routine of needs fulfilment, Maslow envisioned moments of extraordinary experience, known as peak experiences, profound moments of love, understanding, **happiness**, or rapture, during which a person feels more whole, alive, self-sufficient, and yet a part of the world.
- **Political ideal.** Happiness as a guiding ideal is expressed in the United States Declaration of Independence of 1776, written by Thomas Jefferson, as the universal right to “the pursuit of happiness.”<sup>[93]</sup>
- **Measuring Happiness.** Since 2012, a World Happiness Report has been published. Happiness is evaluated, as in “How happy are you with your life as a whole?”,

### Christ’s view.

A student of the bible will see something strange about happiness. Some of the verses explaining this “upside down” strangeness includes:

#### **The Lord himself sings and is full of joy!**

*The Lord your God is with you; his power gives you victory. The Lord will take delight in you, and in his love he will give you new life. **He will sing and be joyful over you**” Zeph 3: 17 (GNT).*

### Joy is a natural response of thanks, an overflow of love - following rescue and rest from God

- *“Shout for joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious. Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you. All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you; they sing the praises of your name.” Come and see what God has done, his awesome deeds for mankind!” Psalms 66: 1-5 (NIV).*
- *“What a rich harvest your goodness provides! Wherever you go there is plenty. The pastures are filled with flocks; the hillsides are full of joy. The fields are covered with sheep; the valleys are full of wheat. **Everything shouts and sings for joy.**” Psalms 65: 11 – 13 (GNT).*

### One can have joy – even in the midst of suffering, like Christ

- *“As pressure and stress bear down on me, I find **joy** in your commands.” Psalms 119:143 NLT*
- *“Dear brothers and sisters, **when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.** For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing. If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.” James 1:2-6 NLT*
- *“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, **who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame,** and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12: 1-2 (NKJV).*

### The Joy of the Lord is not like the pleasures of this world

- *“for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Romans 14: 17 (NKJV).*

### Joy is a command – for all times (good and bad)

- *“Be joyful **always**, pray at **all times**, be thankful in **all circumstances**. This is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus.” <http://bible.com/68/1th.5.16-18.gnt>*
- *“Let the saints be joyful in glory; Let them sing aloud on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, And a two-edged sword in their hand,” <http://bible.com/114/psa.149.5-6.nkjv>*

### Summary differences in world view vs Christian view

A popular world view is that happiness is the ultimate goal for many humans. The Christian view however is that worship of God is the ultimate goal – AT ALL TIMES - whether in times of happiness or sadness. God gives you joy, as a gift – to worship him.

Deep seated joy is a gift of the Holy Spirit. It is not something you can attain for yourself. It is also a characteristic of Christians, rather than the primary goal for them to achieve, as is the common world view.

### Part 3: Further lessons on joy

#### Question: "Is there a difference between joy and happiness?"

It is common today to hear believers speak of a difference between joy and happiness. The teaching usually makes the following points: 1) Happiness is a feeling, but joy is not. 2) Happiness is fleeting, but joy is everlasting. 3) Happiness depends on circumstances or other people, but joy is a gift from God. 4) Happiness is worldly, but joy is divine. But there is no such distinction made in Scripture, and forcing a distinction between two words that are so obviously close in meaning is unnecessary.

If a person is joyful, then he or she is happy. There's no such thing as glum joy. We cannot drain joy of emotion and still call it "joy." When God's Spirit gives us joy, then we are happy people. Christians should be joyful; happiness should characterize our everyday lives.

Of course, there are different types of joy and happiness. There is a joy that comes from the world, such as "the fleeting pleasures of sin" spoken of in Hebrews 11:25. There is a joy that is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). There is a temporary happiness and an eternal happiness, but we can call both "happiness." We just need to decide where our joy comes from. Are we happy in the Lord, or are we content with the happiness the world affords?

#### A Personal lesson/encouragement for you who are "high" on the world's happiness.

So, considering what I used to be and what Christ has taught me thus far, is Christian life "boring" and "not fun" as some would think? I wrote the following entry on 16/3/19:

*Do I miss my "old life style"? Some might ask. I think about it every once in a while - a song on the radio for example reminds you of THAT party.. or perfume scent. Perhaps you bump into old life friends...and wonder about the past. But then here is what I find different - The joy I get in spending time with my King surpasses this "old life".. Sure there can be the thought of the adrenaline rush, but joy is enduring - and I don't think I can give up what he gives me - the assurance that in both this life and the next I will be okay. How I worried about death! What happens to me? What if I die in my sleep? What if I die in this accident or of this disease? Oh gosh what if I die while I am still high? Where will I go after?*

*I am at peace now - Even now as I write this, I hear my Lord, who is the Spirit say "Dickson, I am the life and the resurrection, those who trust in me will never die..."*

## Next steps

How do you blossom into the joy of the Lord, who is the Spirit? Consider the following:

1. How are you cultivating the environment of the Spirit so joy as a fruit can start manifesting? Are you spending time reading the bible, praying, praising/worshiping, fellowshiping?
2. If the Lord himself sings for joy, how about you?
3. How will you practice being joyful even when your circumstances don't look like it?
4. What are you actually grateful for? Can you list 100 things to be joyful to the Lord for? Praise the Lord for this, that is how you blossom into being full of joy, you focus on God – and his wonderfulness to us.

## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/blossoming>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.wikihow.com/Germinate-Orange-Seeds> and <https://homeguides.sfgate.com/orange-blossom-flower-bloom-67096.html>

<sup>iii</sup> Taken from "The Bible Exposition Commentary, New Testament, Volume 1 Matthew – Galatians". Warren W Wiersbe, David Cook, 1989.

<sup>iv</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Happiness>

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/joy-happiness.html>