

September 23, 2026

Joyful Things

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Joyful Things

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JhvVyMPBhys>

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

PHILIPPIANS 4:4

What makes you happy? I found myself pondering this on a beautiful spring morning as I drove into town under Montana's wide, blue sky, dotted with soft, puffy clouds.

It was as if my soul smiled, lifting my winter-weary spirit — like a child soaring a kite on a warm summer day or the comfort of holding a cuddly golden retriever puppy.

As I pulled into my favorite nursery, there they were again — the gobblers! Just like last year, they greeted me with fanned tails and cheerful gobbles, as if welcoming an old friend. After a long week of hard work, I allowed myself the simple pleasure of browsing for flowers to grace my front porch.

Later, driving home with a trunk full of floral treasures, my heart leapt with joy once more. Singing at the top of my lungs to some favorite James Taylor tunes (maybe fueled a little by a Dairy Queen treat I'd indulged in!), I couldn't help but wonder — why aren't all days this joyful? Why does that abundant feeling sometimes feel so fleeting?

King David points us to a deeper source in Psalm 16:11: "You reveal the path of life to me; in your presence is abundant joy; at your right hand are eternal pleasures."

David reminds us that true joy is found in God's presence — a joy that isn't temporary or dependent on circumstances, but eternal and sustaining.

Joy is different from happiness. Happiness measures how good we feel over time, but joy lives in the present moment — a sudden lifting of the heart, a spark that reminds us we are alive and loved.

I feel this same deep joy every Sunday as the bells ring from our small country church — a church where freedom and faith are still deeply treasured, and where we know God is alive and well.

This week, I stumbled across a beautiful song called "Come Let Us Go" by Jonathan Helser, Chris Miller, and the Cageless Birds (I love that name!). It filled me with instant joy.

I imagined my grandmother, in her South African homeland, joining in lively songs much like this before she journeyed to America — songs woven with joy, family, and faith.

The lyrics sing: "Come let us go into the House of the Lord. In Your house, my heart has found a home. In Your house, I'll never be alone. In Your house, love has set me free. In Your house, I'm found by a Father and formed in a family. Let us be glad we're in the House of the Lord. I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the House of the Lord."

Is the secret to lasting happiness found in these little sparks of joy?

Research suggests it might be. Moments of joy create a halo effect — their impact lingers and can, over time, grow into deeper, lasting happiness.

As we close, remember Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!"

It's not a suggestion, but a command — a reminder that choosing joy, even on cloudy days, draws us closer to God. And in Him, we find a wellspring of joyful things that never run dry.

https://youtu.be/JhvVyMPBhys?is=rlvd_xRdm8tzPrco

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