



## Gospel Community Notes & Questions

**Title:** Waiting in & for Joy

**Text:** Isaiah 61:1-7

**Theme:** Jesus came to remove every source of sorrow and to lead us into everlasting joy.

**Teaching Notes:** Our broken world is filled with things that steal our joy. And it's easy and natural to fix our gaze on the things that are frustrating and painful. But Jesus came to break the curse and to begin the redemption of all things. One day he will come again to make all things new. In the meantime, we have the resources of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit to produce deep and abiding joy in us.

### Outline:

#### 1. What is joy?

*Oxford Dictionary:* "a feeling of great pleasure and happiness."

#### 2. Why is joy a challenge?

a. Joy is hard because life is hard.

1) Life is hard because of the curse of the past.

2) Life is hard because of the sin and brokenness of the present.

b. Joy is hard because our feelings are often dictated by our circumstances.

#### 3. How do we get joy?

a. Jesus came to remove or reverse every source of sorrow!

b. Jesus sent his Spirit to bear in us the fruit of joy.

#### 4. How do we wait in joy for the Lord's return?

a. Abide in Jesus while you wait.

b. Rehearse God's goodness and greatness while you wait.

c. Preach the gospel to your feelings while you wait.

d. Rejoice out loud while you wait.



**Questions to explore individually and with your group:**

1. Share a time when you felt overwhelming, spontaneous joy. What do you notice about the experiences that several of you shared with one another?
2. What are the top 2-3 things that steal your joy on a regular basis?
3. According to the redemptive arc of Scripture (Creation → Fall → Redemption → Restoration), why is there so much sorrow and brokenness instead of joy in this present world? Practically, how might that help you to remember?
4. On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being “not at all” and 10 being “all the time”), how much are your feelings dictated by your circumstances? How quickly and easily does your mood change because of what’s happening in/around you?
5. What are some “band-aid” approaches we take toward the sorrow, stress, and angst in our lives? What are some ways you “fake it until you make it” with joy?
6. What did Jesus do that’s categorically different than your answers to #5? What practical difference can this make in your pursuit of joy this week?
7. If joy is a fruit of the Spirit, how would you get more joy? What’s this got to do with John 15:11? Be as practical and specific as possible.
8. Write your own version of Habakkuk 3:17-18, substituting specific challenges in your life. Use this prompt:  
  
*“Though \_\_\_\_\_ [these hard, sad things are happening],  
yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.”*
9. What are some practical, actionable ways you can rejoice in the Lord, even when your heart doesn’t feel joyful? Take something frustrating or exhausting in your life right now and try this!
10. What one actionable thing will you do this week in response to this Scripture?

**Prayer Prompts:**

1. Praise Jesus for coming to break the curse of sin, to reverse every source of sorrow, and to begin making everything sad come untrue.
2. Acknowledge what’s robbing you of joy right now; confess to the Lord any sinful attitudes or actions, including a lack of trust or abiding in him.
3. Ask God, by his Spirit, to bear the fruit of joy in you as you abide in his love. Ask him to enable you to hold the tension between real-world sorrow and the conviction that your grief is neither ultimate nor permanent.