

Day 7

Joy

Silence (2 minutes) Take some time to be quiet, to calm down, and to listen. What has God been teaching you? What are the next steps He wants you to take? How is your spirit doing?

Scripture *"Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls."* 1 Peter 1:8-9

Discussion Peter is writing to believers throughout modern-day Turkey. They are suffering through trials and he reminds them of their new birth, hope, and inheritance. In the above passage Peter states they have never seen Jesus in the past or at the time of his letter. However, they love and believe in Jesus and *"...are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy..."* They live in and are used to cultures that worship idols. The idols are not alive; they don't live, die, and come back to life. They can't be known. They don't hear or speak. And they don't offer forgiveness, a new birth, or an inheritance of knowing God eternally. Now, these readers of Peter's letter believe that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah, that He died for their sin and was raised from the dead. They have the Holy Spirit living in them, teaching, guiding, and interceding for them. They hear the Shepherd's voice. What about being a Christian has filled us *"with an inexpressible and glorious joy?"* Maybe it was the moment we believed and became born again. Perhaps it's the contrast between how we lived in the past and our present lives. Maybe it was experiencing being forgiven of a particular sin from long ago; a sin that we knew was wrong and felt shame for, but couldn't escape. Maybe it's recognizing that we no longer feel hopeless, alone, or separated from God. Maybe it's our present relationship with Jesus, our times of prayer, closeness, safety, and comfort that we have. Maybe it's the privilege of serving God and pleasing Him. Or, maybe our joy comes from our hope for the future, our inheritance which God protects; knowing that someday Jesus will raise us from the dead and we will be with Him forever. Our joy is a gift from our loving God.

Application Consider everything you've learned about joy this week. Write down the one thing you want God to continue teaching you about His joy as you mature as a Christian and keep it somewhere you know will help remind you of God's joy in your life.

Prayer Father, thank You for the joy of knowing and belonging to You. Thank You for rescuing me, forgiving me, that my life has meaning and hope. Thank You that I have the privilege of serving You. I praise You for Your love, kindness, and overwhelming generosity. I am very grateful, Father. I love You. Amen.

Silence (2 minutes) Talk to God about what you are learning. What are your fears? Where are your hangups? Pray for direction.

Scripture memory for the week: *"For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."* Hebrews 12:2b-3