

CHEER UP

John 16:33; Acts 13:47-48; Acts 16:25-34; Habakkuk 3:17-19

To be cheerful is to be ready to greet others with a welcome, a word of encouragement, an enthusiasm for the task at hand and a positive outlook on the future.

1. We can be full of joy and peace if we remember that the ultimate victory has already been won by Christ.
2. Encouragement is one of the most effective ways to help others, and there is always someone who needs to be encouraged.
3. A cheerful heart produces faith which results in the miraculous.
4. When nothing makes sense in our life and when troubles seem more than we can bear, remember that God always give us strength to overcome our difficulties.
5. If we want to be happy, we must draw close to God, the Source of our happiness.
6. Our inner attitudes do not have to reflect our outer circumstances.
7. Ultimate joy comes from Christ dwelling within us.
8. The secret to a happy heart is filling our minds with thoughts that are true, pure and lovely.

Differences between Joy and Happiness:

1. Inward joy is steady as long as we trust God. Happiness is unpredictable.
2. Inward joy defeats discouragement. Happiness covers it up.
3. Inward joy is lasting. Happiness is temporary.

LIFE GROUPS — HOMEWORK & DISCUSSION

MY LIFE — Getting to know one another.

LIFE IN THE WORD — Exploring God's Word together.

LIFE AT HOME — Applying God's Word to our daily lives.

MY LIFE

1. Benjamin Franklin once gave a stirring speech on the Constitution, a heckler in the crowd shouted, *“Aw, them words don’t mean nothin’ at all. Where’s all the happiness you say it guarantees us?”* Franklin smiled and replied, *“My friend, the Constitution only guarantees the American people the right to pursue happiness; you have to catch it yourself.”*

Take a moment to think about your good memories and share one of your happiest?

2. A famous psychiatrist, once observed, *“I’ve never had to treat anyone who could really laugh at himself.”* Are you able to laugh at yourself? Explain why or why not?

Has this helped you in life or hurt you? Explain.

LIFE IN THE WORD

1. Health and happiness are two goals of all people. Proverbs 17:22 in *The Message* says, “*A cheerful disposition is good for your health; gloom and doom leave you bone-tired.*” The Amplified Bible puts it this way, “*A happy heart is good medicine and a cheerful mind works healing, but a broken spirit dries up the bones.*” Have you experienced the healing benefits of a cheerful mind? How do you cheer up when bad things happen?

2. Do you have a favorite verse or passage of Scripture that you turn to in times of discouragement? If so, can you share it with us or tell us why it is special to you?

3. Read Proverbs 15:13. What wisdom can we learn from this verse?

4. Read Proverbs 12:25. Do you agree with the writer that a kind word cheers people up? If so, what are some ways that we can use our words to cheer up ourselves or others?

5. We all have the power and opportunity to bless others or curse them. An Irish Blessing says, *“May God grant you always...A sunbeam to warm you, a moonbeam to charm you, a sheltering Angel so nothing can harm you. Laughter to cheer you. Faithful friends near you. And whenever you pray, Heaven to hear you.”*

If you were to write a “Blessing” to speak over someone close to you, what would you write? *(Go ahead and give it a try. Write a blessing from your heart now.)*

LIFE AT HOME

How Can We Improve our Church?

If we want to improve our church, it is really “up” to me and you. To improve our church all we need to do is encourage our missing folks to show up, our sleeping folks to wake up, our lazy folks to get up, our discouraged folks to cheer up, our dishonest folks to confess up, our gossiping folks to shut up, our estranged folks to make up, our disgusted folks to sweeten up, our angry folks to shape up, our slack folks to pay up, our closed folks to open up, our quiet folks to speak up, our lukewarm folks to fire up, our believing folks to pray up, and our faithful folks to stand up.

To do this all we have to do is wake up, look up, pray up, sing up, teach up, cheer up, stay up, and not give up, back up, or shut up, but continue to lift Jesus up until the lost come up and the church is built up.

You see, it is really “up” to you and me.

—Author Unknown