

PASTOR'S CORNER - UNSHAKABLE JOY

INTRODUCTION

Today we continue our series called Unshakeable, where we learn how God frees us on the inside from fear, doubt, and anything that tries to hold us down. In **Part 1, The Road to Revival**, we saw how God can completely transform a person's life. In **Part 2**, we learn that even after God changes us, we will still face challenges, trials, and difficult seasons. The good news is that God gives us something that can remain strong through it all, unshakeable joy.

Unshakeable joy is a joy that does not fall apart when life gets hard. It does not disappear when problems arise or when circumstances become difficult. It is a joy that remains steady because it is rooted in Jesus Christ. Many people believe that following Jesus should remove all struggles, but Jesus Himself said in **John 16:33**, **"In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."** Trouble is not proof that God has left us. Often, it is evidence that God is still working in us and through us.

The apostles understood this truth. After being arrested, threatened, and beaten for preaching the gospel, they walked away rejoicing. Instead of becoming bitter, discouraged, or fearful, they responded with joy. Their response teaches us a powerful lesson: our perspective during trials often determines whether we become bitter or joyful.

Unshakeable Joy Comes From a Relationship With God

Acts 5:41 tells us that the apostles departed **"rejoicing."** The word rejoicing describes a deep inner joy that is not based on what is happening externally, but on what is settled internally. This was not temporary happiness or emotional excitement. It was a deep strength and peace rooted in knowing that God was with them and for them.

Their joy was not controlled by their circumstances; it was controlled by their relationship with God. Because they knew God personally, they could experience joy even in painful situations. They understood that God had not forgotten them, abandoned them, or stopped working in their lives.

This is why joy is listed as part of the fruit of the Spirit in **Galatians 5:22-23**. Fruit does not come from striving harder; it comes from remaining connected to the source of life. Jesus explained this in **John 15:5** when He said, **"I am the vine; you are the branches."** Just as a branch receives life from the vine, believers receive joy from staying connected to Christ.

This means we do not have to wait until every problem is solved before we experience joy. When our relationship with God is strong, our joy can remain strong even when life is difficult. Real joy is not found in perfect circumstances; it is found in a close relationship with Jesus.

Unshakeable Joy Comes From the Holy Spirit

True joy is not something we manufacture through positive thinking or determination. It is something God produces within us through the Holy Spirit. **Galatians 5:22** teaches us that joy is part of the fruit of the Spirit. This means joy naturally grows in the life of a believer who stays connected to God.

The Holy Spirit continually reminds us that we belong to God, that we are loved by God, and that God is still working even when we cannot see what He is doing. Because of His presence within us, we can experience joy even during difficult seasons.

Romans 15:13 says, "**May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace by the power of the Holy Spirit.**" Notice that joy is not something God gives in small amounts. He desires to fill us with joy. Through the Holy Spirit, we can find joy knowing that God comforts us when we mourn, sustains us when we are in need, strengthens us when we feel weak, protects us when we feel vulnerable, and remains with us when we feel alone.

No matter what challenges we face, the Holy Spirit provides a steady source of joy that is not dependent on our circumstances. As we pray, worship, and spend time in God's presence, the Holy Spirit continually strengthens our hearts with joy that remains firm and unshakeable.

Unshakeable Joy Grows When We Trust God's Purpose

The apostles rejoiced because they believed their suffering had purpose. **Acts 5:41** says they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus. They did not interpret hardship as evidence that God had abandoned them. Instead, they viewed it as part of God's greater plan for their lives.

James 1:2 tells believers to "**count it all joy when you fall into various trials.**" James is not saying that pain feels good or that we should enjoy suffering. Rather, he teaches that joy can exist in the middle of trials because God is producing something valuable through them. Life is often like a puzzle. When we look at one piece by itself, it may seem confusing and meaningless. Yet when all the pieces come together, a beautiful picture emerges. In the same way, we often see only one piece of our story while God sees the entire picture from beginning to end.

When we trust God's purpose, we stop viewing trials as meaningless interruptions and begin seeing them as part of God's process. Instead of only asking, "**Why is this happening to me?**" we begin asking, "**Lord, what are You teaching me through this?**" As we trust Him, our focus shifts from confusion to confidence. We begin to recognize that God is using every challenge to grow our faith, strengthen our character, and prepare us for what lies ahead.

Unshakeable Joy Is Strength for Every Season

Jesus reminded His followers in **John 16:33** to be of good cheer because He had overcome the world. His victory gives us confidence that no matter what we face, we are never fighting alone.

Psalm 16:11 says, "**In Your presence is fullness of joy.**" This teaches us that true joy is found in closeness with God. His presence provides a deep and complete joy that nothing in this world can replace.

Nehemiah 8:10 declares, "**The joy of the Lord is your strength.**" This means our strength does not come merely from determination or willpower. It comes from the joy that God places within us. His joy enables us to continue moving forward when we feel tired, discouraged, or overwhelmed.

The Apostle Paul described this reality in **2 Corinthians 4:8-9** when he said believers may be pressured but not crushed, perplexed but not in despair, struck down but not destroyed. Challenges are real, but God's sustaining power is greater. He never promised a life without difficulties, but He did promise strength for every difficulty.

Joy does not mean life is easy. Joy means we have confidence that God is with us in every season. It gives us the courage to keep trusting, the peace to keep believing, and the strength to keep moving forward.

CONCLUSION

Acts 5:41 reveals a powerful picture of what unshakeable joy looks like. The apostles were hurt but not broken. They were pressured but not defeated. They were opposed, but still joyful. Their joy was not based on their circumstances but on their relationship with God, the power of the Holy Spirit, trust in God's purpose, and confidence in God's strength.

The same joy that sustained the apostles is available to every believer today. No matter what season you may be facing, God offers a joy that cannot be shaken by disappointment, hardship, opposition, or uncertainty. When we stay connected to Jesus, depend on the Holy Spirit, trust God's purpose, and rest in His strength, we can experience unshakeable joy in every season of life.

Today, Jesus invites us to draw closer to Him. He offers more than temporary happiness; He offers lasting joy. As we remain connected to Him, He fills our hearts with a joy that remains steady, strong, and unshakeable regardless of what comes our way.