

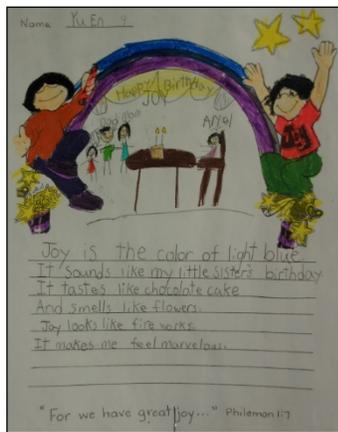
What “sparks joy” for you? If it’s incredibly glorious spring Easter Sunday, the grave is empty kind of weather then you are in luck! If it’s hanging out with lots of friends and family, sporting events, concerts and group activities then your joy might be a little tempered these days.

As the ultimate source of Joy, today is the culmination of a season of sacrifice as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He is risen. He is risen indeed! And yet, our celebration is affected by the reality of our current circumstances.

Over the years, many of my colleagues have known the Joy of Christ but, two stand out. They so fully live out this joy that it’s a gift to those of us who get to hang with them a little. However, neither of these colleagues have had a fairy tale life full of happiness and goodness. Their realities have included intense seasons of grief, hardship and questioning. And yet, the Joy of Christ continues to shine through them. Theirs is not a situational joy but a contagious, deep seeded Joy.



Happiness is influenced by circumstances but, Joy is deeply rooted. As the prophet Nehemiah declares, “This is a sacred day before the Lord. Don’t be dejected or sad, for the joy of the Lord is your strength!” ([Nehemiah 8:10](#)) God loves us and rejoices in us!



At times we are given opportunities to talk about the source of our joy. I remember a classmate in my senior year of high school asking me why I was so positive and happy all the time. I wish I could report that I responded with, “because of deep hope. What you’re seeing is the joy of the Lord” or something meaningful like that. But, she was someone I admired from afar and my less-than-confident teenaged-self mumbled something along the lines of “I don’t know.”

As one of my Joy filled colleagues said, “Joy is something that needs to be nourished and grown. It springs from the deepness of God’s love. Joy is a choice. Something we can move toward and embrace, even when other feelings prevail.”

Do you have joy on this journey? Not necessarily happiness but sincere joy mixed with tears and laughter and sorrow and peace. Can you celebrate your joy with others? Our prayers are, that as we continue with physical distancing, the stresses of remote learning and the entire Covid 19 reality, that you would experience the joy and hope of our risen Lord.

He is risen. He is risen indeed.

Blessings on the journey ahead.

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