

## Joy vs. Pleasure – Lesson

**Lesson goal:** The longer you deny the flesh and feed the spirit, the more the level of joy in your life increases.

**PSALM 97:11 (NIV)**

Light is shed upon the righteous and joy on the upright in heart.

**EPHESIANS 4:22 (NIV)**

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;

One of our old self's chief desires was pleasure, right?

### **Difference between joy and pleasure**

1. Joy is pure and makes you feel good about yourself  
→ Flesh pleasure is momentary and then you don't feel good about yourself when it is done, but you either feel a let down and want more, or shameful, depending on how far you went to get the pleasure.
2. Joy starts slow and builds, the longer you walk in the paths of Christ.  
→ Pleasure starts big, and then fades quickly leaving you feeling empty
3. Joy brings much greater satisfaction, lasting satisfaction,  
→ Pleasure leaves you weaker to battle the attacks of the enemy
4. Things that bring joy bring an increase in personal value and character attributes.

### **How do we develop joy?**

1. Following Christ, and the Spirit of God.
2. Repenting and mourning over sin.
3. Denying false, deceitful desires
4. Being thankful and expressing it often.
5. Worshiping God
6. Thinking about God
7. Making right decisions
8. Standing up for Christ, witnessing
9. Fellowship with other believers and building relationships.
10. Restoring relationships with family members and others we have hurt.
11. Realizing God's plan in your life
12. Giving back to those who have been a blessing to you.
13. Remembering what God has done for you.

Often we have a choice where on the one hand we can have money, a relationship, good standing with others, etc. and on the other hand we can do what is right. What we don't realize is that the choice is really between money and joy, or a relationship and joy. We think it is just “doing the right thing” that will be lost if we choose money or others. We also lose joy.

Value and desire joy, not pleasure.