



## Sing for Joy

Ever have your heart so full of joy that it seems you can't stop singing, or humming or even dancing? You want to shout, "I feel goooood!" You can say that you were happy, but it's more than that, far more than that.

The Psalmist tells us to sing to the Lord a new song. That doesn't mean you need to compose a song, plunk it out on your guitar, or bow it out on your cello. The early Christians in their zeal for worship composed psalms, many of which were indeed a new song. Our hymns accomplish the same purpose, and our heart-song joy is unique to each of us.

I think at the very heart of our joy is the knowledge we have been invited to come to Him and he gives us rest. How do we do that? How do we lay down our worry, our fear, the sense of uncertainty about the future and replace it with the light burden, the easy weight, that brings gladness to each moment of our lives, that our Lord has promised?

Oh, I can hear some of the answers coming from solid Christians: "You just have to believe". Well, yes, but... As a Christian, still I worry, I fear certain threats, and, at times, in my mind, is uncertainty. My belief is a comfort, and the source of what I would call my stability, but that alone does not cause my heart to be full of joy, nor does it cause me to sing, a relief to those who have heard me.

In Paul's days, he had his hands full with the Galatians. Here was a group of brand-new Christians who were struggling with the contrast between the teaching of Jesus, and the teaching of Moses. The general feeling, on the part of many Jews following the laws of Moses, who were now seeking to understand this new relationship with God that

Jesus taught, was that it was “too easy.” There had to be more to it. And, so, these Judaizers tried to blend the new bud of Christianity, with Judaism. The result? It did not work, and they had to make a choice.

They had to make a choice, and so do we. A choice, a simple thing to say, like saying I believe. We can say it but we have to act on it for it to have any measure of value. Joy is a choice. It is not something magical that flows into our being, it is the product of our choosing.

The level of joy you experience is completely and totally up to you. It is not dependent on anyone else – what they do or don’t do, how they behave or don’t behave. We can’t make joy happen by our puny actions. Joy is not dependent on the sadness or suffering or grief or other difficulties that you may endure. Not to belabor the point, but I believe that the amount of joy that you experience in any event, in any given day, is the exact amount that you chose to experience.

I frequently think, say and believe that ‘God is in charge and he loves us’. I believe that with all of my heart, and it’s one of the cornerstones of my faith. But, our Lord and Savior has given us free will, and each day we choose A or B, Yes or No, Left or Right, Up or down. How about Joy or Grumpy or Sad (weren’t they two dwarfs?)? Choice. On this matter, we are in charge.

It is more than “put on a happy face”, it is the hard work of deciding ‘I will be joyful, I will not let this (whatever ‘this’ is) get me down. I will rejoice in the Lord through this day.

[Charles Swindoll](#) tells us: I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I choose to react to it. Choice. Remember Philippians 4:13!

Choose joy and sing a new song. Amen.

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This essay was the Meditation in Stan Escott's [Watchword](#) for June 12, 2020. The content of Watchwords is written from inspiration born of Scripture, devotional readings and reflection. Each post is meant to encourage and give you a sense of peace in these troubled times. To explore Watchwords or sign up for the mailings, visit [bosworth30.com/watchwords/](https://bosworth30.com/watchwords/).