

## **JOY – Joy in God's Presence (with Scripture)**

**Monday, January 3, 2022 – Read Matthew 11:28-30** - 28 *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

Nothing zaps our joy quicker than the burdens of life. Jesus understands our stresses and worries. That's why He calls us to Himself. That's why He offers rest for our souls. The invitation to draw near to God comes with a promise: "and He will draw near to you" (see James 4:8). Something powerful happens in the presence of God. Our perspective is transformed. Our strength is renewed. And our joy is restored. Take time amid your hectic and harried schedule to draw near to God. Humble yourself before Him today and He will lift you up!

**Tuesday, January 4, 2022 – Read Mark 1:35** - *Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.*

Jesus took advantage of every opportunity to spend time alone with His Father, even if it meant getting up early and leaving the house. In a world full of draining activity and constant noise, finding a solitary place to pray is essential to experiencing the joy of the Lord every day. Where is your quiet place? What time of day works best for you to spend time alone with your Heavenly Father? As we begin this new year, make a daily appointment with God and then keep it.

**Wednesday, January 5, 2022 – Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17** - *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

The Bible is the written Word of God. It is His love letter to you and me. As we read, study, and apply His Word to our daily lives, we not only discover who God is, but who we are as His children and what He wants to accomplish in and through our lives. At the beginning of this New Year, find a Bible reading plan or a devotional guide that will help you grow in your walk with the Lord. His Word has the potential of bringing joy to our lives as we read and make it a part of our daily lives.

**Thursday, January 6, 2022 – Read Luke 11:1-4** - *One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."*

*He said to them, "When you pray, say: "'Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. 3 Give us each day our daily bread. 4 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.'"*

Prayer is simply a conversation with God, our Heavenly Father. As He speaks to you through His word, respond by confessing your sin, repenting of your shortcomings, and asking for His help to become the person He created you to be. Thank Him for His provisions and praise Him for His goodness. Bring your questions and concerns to Him and ask for His wisdom and guidance as you navigate the day ahead. Sometimes prayer is simply sitting quietly in His presence. Let us be like Jesus' disciples and learn to pray in 2022!

**Friday, January 7, 2022 – Read Psalm 16:11** - *You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

Spending time in God's presence is essential to experiencing His joy. A daily time alone with God is not meant to be difficult, but it does require discipline. Like Jesus, we must find a quiet place and a suitable time to draw near to God. We must be attentive to God's voice as He speaks to us through His Word. And we must learn how to respond to Him through prayer. Start your New Year off on the right foot by making time alone with

God an essential part of your daily routine. Then you will discover joy in His presence and eternal pleasures at His right hand.