



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3

Joy

Before you begin to read this, make a list of things that make you happy. You can write it down or make a mental list. Try to get as many as you can.

Did you get them all? Now continue reading

In an episode of VeggieTales, Madame Blueberry says she has everything she could ever need, but she is not happy with what she has. On her way home from the store, after buying pretty much everything, she passes a girl who is with her mom and dad on her birthday. The girl does not have much, but she is *happy*. That's when Madame Blueberry realizes that she does not need material items to be happy.

It is easy to get caught up in material things. Go back to your list of things that make you happy. What's on it: A TV show? A book? Your pet? Mom, Dad, Aunt Sally, and Uncle Joe? Did God, church, or the Bible make your list? When we think of what makes us happy, it's so easy to get caught up by the things we see and touch nearest to us. As long as we live, we face the temptation to place God who brings us his salvation on the backburner.

Remember to focus on the *reason* for that joy:

- God gave you "new birth" through baptism!
- God gave you "living hope" through Jesus' resurrection!

Our hope is alive because Jesus is alive! Now we look forward to an eternity in heaven with him! That's something to be happy about! No more trials. No more heartache. No more temptation. We will have the honor of standing at the feet of Jesus. He wiped away our sins with his death so that we can finally know what peace feels like. Resting our hope in Jesus Christ will bring us eternal happiness, no matter what struggles we are faced with here on earth.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the joy of life everlasting in your arms. Continue to work through me so that I can help others find your joy. Guide me to hold tight to your Word when I am faced with trials, and help me to find joy here on earth, knowing that I will find eternal joy it is in heaven with you. Amen.