

# Joy & Happiness Spiritual vs Temporal

By Mike Porter



Joy and happiness are inward feelings or emotions associated with receiving something that is good. I may have joy in my heart through my thoughts or circumstances, but they may come from fleshly feelings, or they may come from spiritual yearnings meditating on scripture.

Some Bible expositors point this out. Examples are given in the following excerpts: Jeremiah 31:13 says, “I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.” Here, in the parallelism of Hebrew poetry, the words *gladness* and *joy* are used synonymously. And Proverbs 23:25 says, “Let your father and your mother be glad, and let her rejoice who gave birth to you.” Being glad is the same thing as rejoicing in this verse. Unless we are willing to say that gladness and happiness are completely different things, then we must say that joy and happiness are linked.

The joy obtained by a saved Christian is in a different category than happiness emotionally experienced by an unsaved person, who just won the lottery, for example. This unsaved person’s joy or happiness is temporal. Spiritual thoughts are from the Lord. The joy and happiness they bring are eternal. The unsaved person does not experience the joy and happiness that the saved Christian experiences because “[the unsaved] man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:14.

It seems to me that a Christian particularly associates joy with things that come from God. We feel joy when we exhibit the righteousness of God’s commandments in our actions. This joy or happiness was apparent to me when Mary (my wife) and I just took a trip to Great Basin National Park in northeast Nevada.

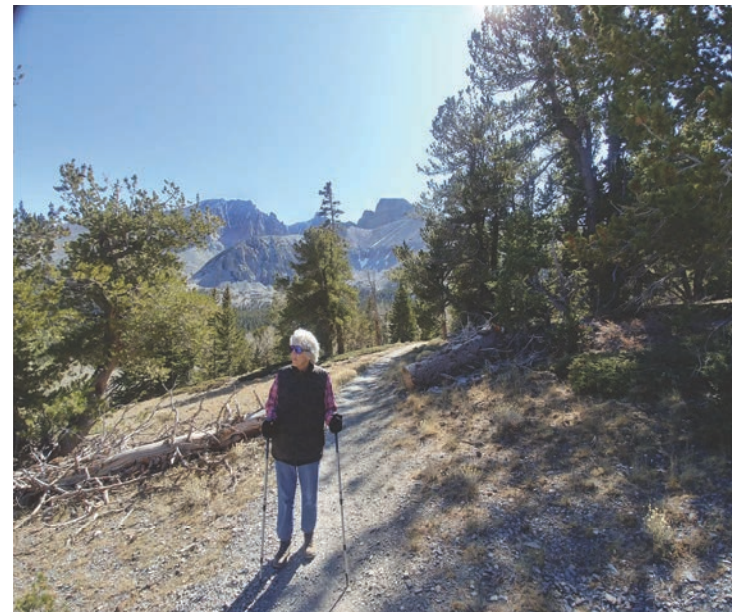
This morning, back home in Gardnerville, it is 16°F, following daytime highs of 75°F. This is a good day to start writing about this joy or happiness. A nice fire is burning in the wood stove.

Two days ago we hiked on trails up Snake Canyon, and in another location, on Wheeler Peak. Wheeler Peak is the second highest peak in Nevada (our home state) at 13,063 feet. I felt joy as we began hiking to Stella Lake up the Wheeler Peak trail. To begin with, it felt like a combination of fleshly happiness and spiritual joy. Fleshly happiness because I was grateful for my physical rejuvenation, having lost 20 pounds from 212 down to 192 being 74 years of age and 6’2” height. At a much younger age I had hiked with Pastor Ray, my friend with

similar interests with whom I worked. Fleshly joy from being able to perform on the trail as I glimpsed past youth, became spiritual joy as I contemplated God’s creation all about me.

Everything was created by Him and for Him. Understanding the scripture in Hebrews 1, 2-3; “...the Father has appointed Christ heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

These thoughts took priority in joyful feelings of the moment. It brings joy to think how “the word of his power” holds all things together, such as the power that holds atoms together and the power that holds the heavenly bodies in their positions, keeps the earth turning and allowing us to see the sun rise each morning.



I looked at Mary hiking up the trail ahead of me. Thankful that God has enabled us to be together (married 53 yrs.) and walk around in His creation. Aware that what I see is what this part of the creation looks like after the Noahic flood.

Nevada is a high desert. The state flower is the sagebrush and the state tree is the pinion pine. Water is in short supply. There are a lot of rocks in Nevada. The land may be like Israel in some respects. Nevada is drier with an average annual rainfall of ~6.5” while in Israel it is ~23.” Water seems even more precious in Nevada where the land is mostly rangeland where sheep and cattle graze. It is a land of mountains and valleys.

When one walks through Nevada it is easy to talk to Jesus and ask him to strengthen you, and wouldn’t it seem like a miracle if you could see water in the land. God’s prophet, Isaiah tells us this about Israel and His servant, Jacob in Isaiah 41:13: “For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying

unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.” Isaiah goes on to say in Isaiah 41:18-20: “I will open rivers in the high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together: That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.” Halleluiah, and praise the Lord. Amen.

The Lord says in Psalm 1:2-3: “But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night, And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he shall doeth shall prosper.”

The Lord says through Isaiah 44:3: “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.” At Isaiah 44:8: “Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, *there is* no God: I know not *any*.”

Water truly satisfies physically, belief in Jesus satisfies forever, to eternity. John the beloved says in John 7:37-38: “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, ‘If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.’” That is to say that the Holy Spirit shall come into and flow out of the regenerated believer in the Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ.

I think about the Heavenly creation and the afterlife and the joy of the Lord’s salvation. Two Bible verses that associate joy and happiness with the Lord and the Spirit are: Romans 14:17: “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost . . .” and Romans 15:13: “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

The promises of God are the basis of all joy in the Lord. The saving Grace of the shed blood of Jesus Christ our Savior is the fulfilled promise.

We look forward to this in Revelation 22:1: “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.”

I think and meditate on these things and say, “Come quickly Lord Jesus, Come.”



## Prayer to Invite Jesus Into Your Heart

Heavenly Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. Your word says, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” and “If you shall confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved” (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:9) You said my salvation would be the result of Your Holy Spirit giving me new birth by coming to live in me (John 3:5-6, 15-16; Romans 8:9-11) and that if I would ask, You would fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Luke 11:13; Acts 2:4

I am taking You at Your word, so right now I ask Jesus to be Lord of my life and I believe in my heart that You raised Him from the dead. Thank You for coming into my heart. I turn my life over to You. I ask You now to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Thank You for filling me with Your Holy Spirit as You have promised, and for being Lord over my life. Thank you for changing me daily into the person You desire me to be. Amen