

# Positively Speaking

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## To Rejoice is a Choice

The longer I live, the more I'm convinced this is true. We will express joy only as much as we are determined to do it.

It's commonly believed that rejoicing is simply a response. Certainly, there is some truth to that perspective. If my team wins the game, I rejoice. If I receive some unexpected money, I rejoice. If I experience a happy event (such as a marriage or birth of a new baby) I rejoice.

However, rejoicing goes far beyond the emotional response to life's happenings. If it's only a response to the moment's event – then it comes and goes – rises and falls – depending on what's happening now. That kind of thinking makes our attitude a roller coaster – up one minute and down the next.

The Bible says to "Rejoice evermore" (1 Thessalonians 5:16.) It also says, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and I say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4.) Now, the Bible does not command us to do the impossible. These verses of Scripture tell us to rejoice continuously – so it must be possible to do so. The Bible assumes that rejoicing goes deeper than our circumstance and situation. Take a look sometime at the verses in the Bible that speak of joy and rejoicing. It permeates the whole Book! As C. S. Lewis said, "Joy is the serious business of heaven."

I've noticed that the folks I know with the deepest joy are people who have gone through a lot of heartache and suffering. They have learned the secret of choosing an attitude of rejoicing rather than one of grumbling and complaint.

If you want to find something to complain about – you'll find it.  
If you want to find something to rejoice over – you'll find it.

You get what you look for!

To rejoice is a choice.

Look beyond the present difficulty to the future hope. Seek the solution rather than the problem. Focus on what IS rather than what ISN'T. Whatever comes, make the choice to rejoice today!

Helen Steiner Rice captures this concept with these words that I recently shared at a friend's funeral:

After the clouds, the sunshine,  
After the winter, the spring.  
After the shower, the rainbow.  
For life is a changeable thing.  
After the night, the morning,  
Bidding all darkness cease.  
After life's cares and sorrows,  
The comfort and sweetness of peace.

To rejoice is a choice.