

*A cheerful*  
**HEART**  
*IS GOOD*  
**MEDICINE,**  
*but*  
**A CRUSHED spirit**  
**DRIES UP**  
**THE BONES.**

- Proverbs 17:22 -



## CHAPTER 6

# *She is Joyful*

### SCRIPTURE FOCUS: HABAKKUK 3

*Have you ever caught yourself thinking,* I was having such a great day until that person ruined it? Or maybe you've said, I was so happy until they made me sad. It's easy to believe other people have the power to control how we feel, isn't it? But here's the truth—no one can make us angry, bitter, or discouraged. They don't have the authority to reach inside and take charge of what's going on in our hearts.

Picture this: two people receive the same short text from the same person. It's blunt. It's unkind. Maybe it feels accusatory. One person reads it, exhales, and decides not to take the bait. The other reads it and can't let it go—re-reading it, feeling the sting, building a whole conversation in their head. Same words. Same message. Two totally different responses.

Why? Because our emotions don't come from the outside in. They rise from the inside—that private place where we interpret what happens to us. It's where we decide what we believe about God, what we believe about



## SHE CARRIES A CHEERFUL HEART

Proverbs 17:22 says, “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones” That doesn’t mean a P31 Woman never feels sadness. It means she refuses to let sorrow become her home. She brings her burdens to the Lord, asks Him to steady her, and chooses to trust Him again.

A P31 Woman understands that joy flows from the Holy Spirit within her. When her heart is anchored in God, her words are gentler, her patience lasts longer, and her home feels safer.

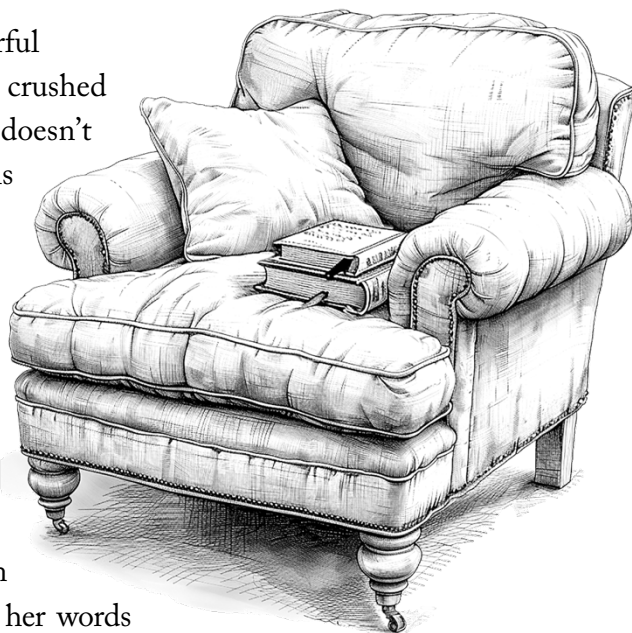
She may still have hard days, but she doesn’t have to live crushed. She can return to truth, return to prayer, and return to the God who strengthens her.

And that’s exactly why I love the ending of Habakkuk.

Habakkuk chapter 3 is a prayer and a song that closes his short book. Earlier, Habakkuk wrestles with what he sees around him. He asks hard questions. He doesn’t understand why evil seems to go unchecked, or why God would allow such painful things to unfold. But by the time he reaches the final chapter, he’s not spiraling in confusion—he’s worshiping. He remembers what God has done in the past, and in that remembering, his faith gets stronger.

It’s a picture of a heart moving from fear to faith, from questioning to worship. It reminds us that even when we can’t see what God is doing, we can trust who He is.

But here’s what stands out most: by the time Habakkuk reaches the end, nothing around him has changed. The nation is still facing judgment. The outlook still looks bleak. The circumstances are still the circumstances.



The only thing that changes is his focus.

And he makes one of the clearest declarations of joy in the Bible:

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no  
grapes on the vines... yet I will rejoice in the LORD,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.

— Habakkuk 3:17–18

It's easy to tie our joy to the things of this world:

- Financial security
- The approval of others
- A thriving career
- The comfort of relationships

They give us a feeling of comfort and security, but at the same time they can also be taken away. And if your joy is tied to what can be taken away, then your joy is at risk.

Paul warns us "...not to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God..." (1 Timothy 6:17, NIV)

This doesn't mean we can't enjoy blessings. God gives good gifts. But we don't build our emotional foundation on gifts. We build it on the Giver.

That's exactly what Habakkuk did. No figs. No grapes. No harvest. Yet—God. That's not pretending the fig tree is budding when it isn't. That's faith.

Habakkuk looks straight at loss—empty branches, bare vines, no visible provision—and then he chooses his "yet." Yet I will rejoice. Not because life is easy. Not because he has answers. But because God is still God, and God is still his Savior.

This kind of joy is rooted in trust—joy that rises from faith rather than comfort or outcomes. It’s the same kind of joy Paul calls us to,

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

—Philippians 4:4

Notice where that joy is anchored: in the Lord. It’s not about having a stress-free week or everything going to plan. It’s a steady, unchanging reliance on God that gives us every reason to rejoice.

And once you see that, it changes the way you define joy. Joy isn’t the absence of trouble. It’s a decision to praise God, right where you are—even with tears in your eyes—even if you don’t have all of the answers yet.

Habakkuk chose his ‘yet.’ What is a ‘yet’ statement you need to make right now, even if nothing around you has changed?

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## **SHE CAN HOLD SORROW AND JOY IN THE SAME HANDS**

And isn't that the mystery of joy? How it can coexist with our struggles? How we can walk through deep pain and still have a steady willingness to trust God again tomorrow?

That's what I think about when I read Hebrews 12:2: "For the joy set before him he endured the cross..."

The joy wasn't separate from the suffering. It was part of what carried Him through. If we're not careful, we'll miss that. We'll think joy is something we have to wait for—something reserved for after the struggle is over.

But biblical joy isn't only at the finish line. It's also in the process.

Now, let's be clear: joy doesn't mean we don't grieve. Jesus didn't pretend. He didn't slap a spiritual smile over sorrow. When He stood at Lazarus' tomb, he wept. Real tears. Real grief. Real love.

And yet, His trust in the Father never wavered.

That helps me so much, because many of us confuse joy with happiness. Happiness rises when life is going our way. Joy is deeper. Joy is the settled confidence that God is still good—even when life hurts, even when we don't understand, even when we're waiting.

Sorrow and joy aren't enemies. We don't trade one for the other like we're swapping out a sad day for a happy one. Some days, they walk side by side. And the presence of sorrow doesn't prove the absence of joy. It often proves you're living in a real world with a real Savior.

## **SHE LOOKS AT OBSTACLES AS OPPORTUNITIES**

We tend to see trials as obstacles—things blocking us from where we think we should be. We assume that if life gets hard, we must have missed something. But what if difficulties aren't obstacles at all? What if they're opportunities to experience God in ways we might otherwise miss?

Matthew 14:22-33 tells the story of the disciples out on the lake, battling wind and waves. And here's a detail that matters: Jesus "made the

disciples get into the boat.” They were doing what He told them to do—and landed up in a difficult spot. And while we might think that the eye of a storm is the worst place to be—it’s not. Sometimes the clearest revelation of who God is, comes in the middle of a difficult season.

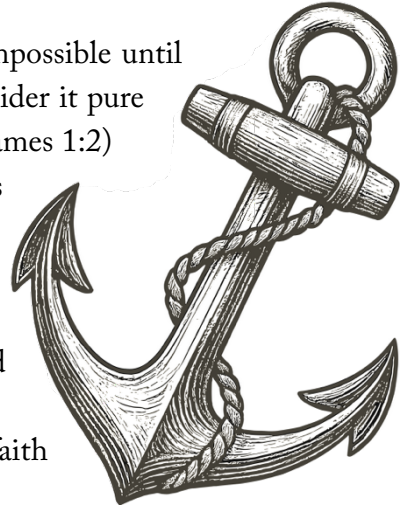
And when our joy is anchored in His faithfulness, we won’t be shaken by the waves.

James says something that almost sounds impossible until you’ve lived long enough to understand it: Consider it pure joy... whenever you face trials of many kinds. (James 1:2)

Why would James say that? Because trials refine faith. They teach endurance. They train us to lean on Jesus. They strip away self-reliance and force us to decide what we really believe.

And the storm can’t change the fact that God is still our protector, our helper, and strength.

So, the question becomes: Do I have more faith in my struggle, or in God’s ability to handle it?



James 1:2-3

James tells us to consider it pure joy when we face trials.

What reason does he give?

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Romans 15:13

What three results does this verse connect to trusting God, and what is the source of that hope?

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Hebrews 12:2 & 1 Peter 4:13

Jesus endured the cross for the "joy that was set before Him." What future joy is promised to those who share in Christ's sufferings?

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1 Peter 1:6-9

Peter holds rejoicing and grief side by side. According to verses 7-9, what is the purpose of these trials, and what is the "inexpressible and glorious joy" connected to?

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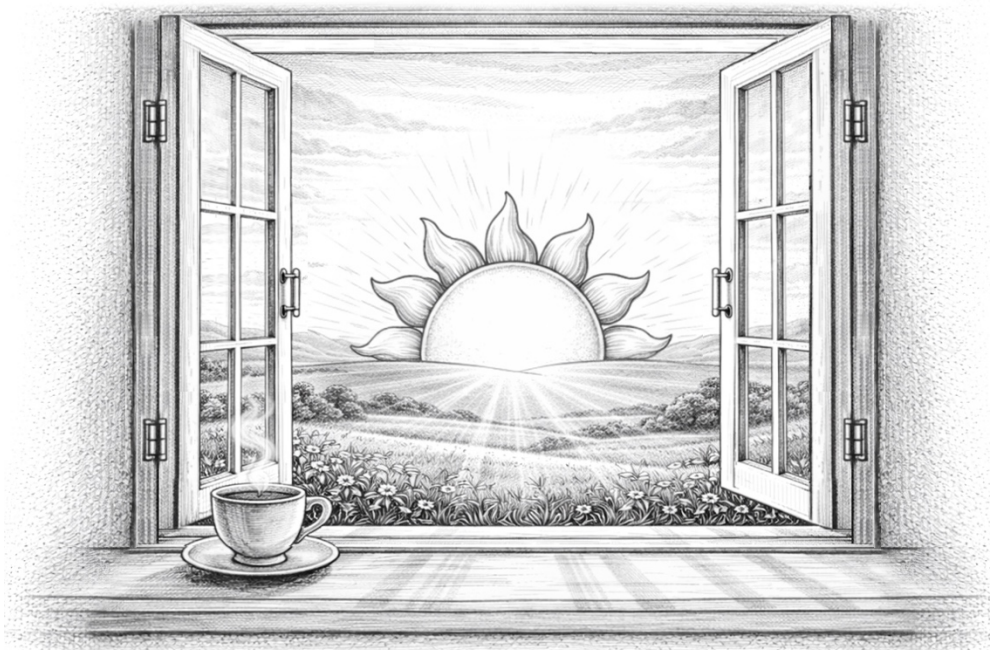
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## SHE GUARDS HER JOY FROM THE ENEMY'S LIES

Some days, we don't even realize we're under attack until we're completely drained—and our joy feels depleted. The enemy uses lies to deceive, temptation to lure, condemnation to intimidate, and fear to keep us from walking in faith.

But here's the bottom line: he is no match for the power of God. The enemy may try to shake you, but he can't steal what God has secured.

That doesn't mean we ignore the battle. It means we fight it the right way. We fight with truth. We fight by bringing our thoughts back under the lordship of Christ. We fight by remembering that joy is not the reward for easy living—it is a fruit that grows in a heart that trusts God.



And this is where we need to be honest: joy is not always my first response to trouble. I don't wake up to bad news and immediately feel like throwing a praise party. But when I stop and remember who my God is—when I remind myself that He is faithful, present, and working—joy begins to rise again.

Sometimes it starts with a small step of faith—a choice to trust God. It's strengthened with each step I take, and before I know it, my heart catches up to what I know to be true—I can rest in His strength.

Cast all your anxiety on him  
because he cares for you  
—1 Peter 5:7

Don't get me wrong, it's not about pretending things are fine when they're not. It isn't denying pain or forcing a smile. Joy is fixing our eyes on Jesus instead of our circumstances. It's choosing to believe He is still in control, still good, still faithful—no matter what.

And sometimes that decision looks like this:

- “Lord, help me today.”
- “Lord, I will thank You for what is true.”
- “Lord, I will worship even while I wait.”

That's not fake. That's faith.

## **SHE FINDS JOY IN OBEDIENCE**

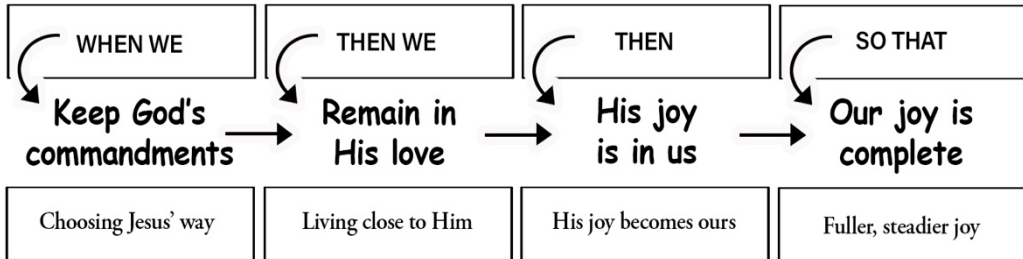
Jesus said: “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” (John 15:11)

So, what connection was Jesus making here? What “this” was he linking to joy? Obedience. “If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love...” (John 15:10)

Disobedience promises freedom and pleasure, but what it delivers instead is regret, guilt, and fallout that weighs down the heart.

Obedience, draws us closer to God. His commands aren't barriers to joy. They are guardrails that keep us on the path that produces fruit and protects our joy.

## JOHN 15: THE PATH TO JOY



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John Piper put it this way: “Sin lies... it promises pleasure in disobedience... The only way that sin can be broken is by the presence and the promise of a superior pleasure, and His name is Jesus.”

That’s the fight, isn’t it? Not just resisting bad choices, but refusing to believe the lie that sin will satisfy more than Jesus.

So where does it start? Right there in God’s Word—by listening to what Jesus says and taking Him seriously. Jesus never separates obedience from relationship. He speaks as a Savior who loves us, not as a taskmaster demanding perfection. When we keep His commands, we stay close to Him. And in that closeness, something beautiful happens—His joy begins to shape our hearts, steady our emotions, and reframe our circumstances.

This kind of joy doesn’t depend on having a smooth day or getting our way. It’s deeper than that. It’s the quiet confidence that comes from walking with God instead of drifting from Him. A Proverbs 31 woman understands this. She doesn’t obey to earn God’s love; she obeys because she already has it. And as she walks in step with Him, she discovers what Jesus promised all along—a joy that is full, grounded, and able to last.

That’s why joy grows as we grow in the Word. It’s not about getting through a checklist or surviving a long reading session. Reading the Bible without understanding can feel like listening to someone speak in a language you barely know. But I promise you, the more you study, the more

engaging it becomes. God's Word was never meant to feel confusing or distant. He wants to be known.

Here's the heart of it: joy doesn't come from simply knowing about God—it comes from truly knowing Him. And that kind of relationship develops as we spend time in His Word. The more we understand His heart, the more we trust His ways—and that's where joy is found.

So how do we grow in that understanding?

- Don't be afraid to say, "I don't get it." Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you.
- Ask questions as you read. What does this show me about God? Is there a command or promise here?
- Slow down. Spending time to focus on a few verses can be enough for God to speak clearly.
- Use helpful tools. A study Bible (like the NIV Study Bible) and trusted commentaries can bring clarity.
- Connect with others. Small group settings, which many churches have, are a great place to ask, learn, and encourage each other.
- Do a Bible study. Focused time in Scripture helps it settle into your heart. Visit [TimeWarpWife.com](http://TimeWarpWife.com) to find a large selection of studies just like this one. And, if you subscribe there you can view and download most of them for free.

## The P31 Challenge

How does this chapter challenge you to protect your joy by changing what you rehearse in your mind—hurt and fear, or truth and trust in the Lord?

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For the next 7 days, start each morning by choosing one “yet” statement and praying it to the Lord before you check your phone.

For example, you might pray:

*I’m struggling with \_\_\_\_\_. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior (Habakkuk 3:18, NIV).*