

DEVICE 6: Satan tells a believer, "You lost the joy you used to have in Christ Jesus. Could it be that you only imagined you had it and you were never really saved?"

Remedy 1 – You can be full of love for God even though your emotions offer no comfort. So, tell yourself: "My comfort is gone. That is true." (O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me. (Ps. 63:1, 2, 8 ESV); Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of his servant? Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. (Isa. 50:10 ESV); Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation (Ps. 42:5 ESV)).

"But the God who provided that comfort is still with me" (fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isa. 41:10 ESV); Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Ps. 23:4 ESV)

"He has not changed" (For from the top of the crags I see him, from the hills I behold him; behold, a people dwelling alone, and not counting itself among the nations! (Num. 23:9 ESV).

"I lost my joy, but God's grace does not change." (The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;²³ they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.²⁴ "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." (Lam. 3:22-24 ESV).

"Joy is fragile like grass. It can fade and wither." (As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; (Ps. 103:15 ESV); A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass.⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. (Isa. 40:6-8 ESV)

Remedy 2 – Think about the joys you haven't lost, because they are more enduring.

Everything about your relationship with Christ remains (I have heard Ephraim grieving, "You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the LORD my God.¹⁹ For after I had turned away, I relented, and after I was instructed, I struck my thigh; I was ashamed, and I was confounded, because I bore the disgrace of my youth."²⁰ Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child? For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, declares the LORD. (Jer. 31:18-20 ESV)):

- **Sonship** [But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (Jn. 1:12-13 ESV)]
- **Heir of the promise** [So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath,¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.¹⁹ We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. (Heb. 6:17-20 ESV)]
- **Saint** [So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (Eph. 2:19 ESV)]

Your union with Christ is intact.

Remedy 3 – Think about all the Christians who are now in heaven. When they were on earth, they had the same kind of experiences you are having. They, also, were not filled with joy all the time while they remained on earth.

Consider these examples from the Bible:

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. (Ps. 51:12 ESV);

As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved." By your favor, O LORD, you made my mountain stand strong; you hid your face; I was dismayed. (Ps. 30:6-7 ESV);

Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No; he would pay attention to me. (Job 23:6 ESV);

"Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I do not perceive him; on the left hand when he is working, I do not behold him; he turns to the right hand, but I do not see him. (Job 23:8&9 ESV);

"For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears; for a comforter is far from me, one to revive my spirit; my children are desolate, for the enemy has prevailed." (Lam. 1:16 ESV);

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46 ESV);

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation (Ps. 42:5 ESV); The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to mourning. (Lam. 5:15 ESV)

Remedy 4 – There are many reasons you may have less joy: (a) The Holy Spirit may have known that you needed it more at that time than you need it now, (b) Everything was new then, and perhaps the sudden change overwhelmed you with joy.

Even though the Holy Spirit does, on occasion give miraculous witness to God’s presence, He doesn’t do it all the time in the same way [And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. (Acts 2:3 ESV)].

Remedy 5 – Remind yourself that God will restore all comfort to you in His time.

You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me again; from the depths of the earth you will bring me up again.²¹ You will increase my greatness and comfort me again. (Ps. 71:20-21 ESV)

I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners, (Isa. 57:18 ESV)

He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (Ps. 126:6 ESV)

Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.⁸ By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. (Ps. 42:7-8 ESV)

Questions

- 1. Another way you may have heard this sort of problem explained is that we should know the facts of our relationship to Christ, and not base everything on our emotions alone. So, if your emotions are in turmoil what should you say to yourself?*
- 2. You may want to try to get the emotional high back. Why do you think nothing is mentioned here about how to get the emotional high to come back again?*
- 3. So what are some of the solid assurances of salvation that a Christian should have?(see Remedy 2)*
- 4. What happened? Why is it you used to have a joyous sense of assurance and now you know you really are saved, but you just don’t seem so joyous about it? (See Remedy 4)*