

Journal Guide: A Life Marked by Joy

Luke 5:33–39

Set Your Heart

Before you begin, take a moment to be still and pray:

- Ask God to help you not just understand this passage, but to **experience joy in Him**.
- Invite Him to reveal anything in your heart that is distracting you from enjoying Him.

Read the Passage

Read **Luke 5:33–39** slowly.

As you read, write down:

- Words or phrases that stand out to you
- Anything that feels confusing or surprising

Understanding the Big Idea

In this passage, people expected a relationship with God to look serious, heavy, and even sorrowful.

But Jesus points to a wedding—a celebration.

Life with Jesus is meant to be marked by joy.

Take a moment to reflect:

- When you think about your relationship with Jesus, would you describe it as joyful? Why or why not?

Joy Comes from His Presence

Jesus describes Himself as a bridegroom. A wedding is not a place for mourning—it's a place for joy.

Reflection Questions:

- When do you feel most aware of Jesus' presence in your life?
- When do you feel most distant from Him?
- What tends to distract you from enjoying Him?

Write your thoughts:

Joy Comes from New Life

Jesus uses images (new cloth, new wine) to show that He didn't come to patch your life—He came to make you new.

Read **2 Corinthians 5:17**.

Reflection Questions:

- What does it mean to you that you are a “new creation”?
- Are there areas where you are still living like your “old self”?
- How might that be affecting your joy?

Write your thoughts:

Joy Comes from New Desires

Often, our joy is small because our desires are focused on lesser things.

Reflect on this quote from C.S. Lewis:

“It would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

Reflection Questions:

- What “lesser things” tend to capture your attention and desire?
- Where might you be settling instead of pursuing deeper joy in God?
- What do you think it would look like to truly desire Jesus more?

Write your thoughts:

Honest Reflection: Where Is Your Joy?

Take a moment to honestly assess:

- My joy in Jesus right now feels:
 - Strong
 - Fading
 - Distant
- What do you think is contributing to this?

Write your thoughts:

A Simple Response: Returning to Joy

Joy is the goal—not duty, not performance.

But sometimes, when joy is missing, we need to respond intentionally.

One way Scripture points to is fasting—not as a burden, but as a way to refocus your heart.

Fasting is simply saying:

“Jesus, I want You more than this.”

Personal Step

Consider one step you can take this week:

- What is one way you can intentionally pursue joy in Jesus?
- Is there something you might set aside (food, media, distraction) to focus more on Him?

Write your plan:

Closing Prayer

Write a short prayer in your own words:

- Ask Jesus to restore your joy
- Ask Him to deepen your desire for Him
- Thank Him for offering you something far greater than anything else

Final Thought

You were not created to live a half-hearted spiritual life.

You were created to **enjoy Jesus**.

Don't settle for less.