

# Amber's Article

## Joyful Happy-Endings

*One Saturday morning a little boy and his father took a long awaited trip to the local pet store in search of a new puppy. "Son, which one do you want?" The little boy immediately pointed at the dog with the furiously wiggling tail and announced with great certainty, "I want that one, Daddy! I want the one with the happy ending."*



We all want a life filled with happy endings, but we seem to be living lives that could be described as, well... "joy-less."

Our God promises that if you know Him you will know true Joy. Joy is not merely happiness but rather an unshakable confidence that **\*God is in control.** He is our one and only source of Joy! He stands ready and waiting to jump in & fill each and every circumstance with His presence. His Joy is ours to claim!

But...if this is true...then where is it? Where's the Joy in every situation?? Why do we not have the same **\*confidence** (see above) as we do, sitting here reading this article, to go through each day and its trials?

Maybe it is because of the "Joy Stealers" who are just waiting to crush Joy wherever they find it. Can't you picture it? Little shadowy creatures like finances, painful experiences, job situations, sickness, fear, broken dreams, time to fit everything in, other people's negativity...just waiting to rob us of the Joy we are entitled to claim each day as children of God.

Friends, I will say it like we have all heard it before: **Nothing can take your Joy without your permission!!!**

I KNOW life can be painful. I KNOW it is often hard and unfair. But I also KNOW that God is in control.

I have read the final chapter and we win! Now THAT is what I call the happiest ending of all!

Is your tail waggin' yet?

Choose NOW what your response will be BEFORE someone or something tries to steal your joy. Make a list of the people or circumstances that you would classify as "Joy stealers" and pray over them!

Pray for wisdom in dealing with each person and circumstance!

List some steps to take in order to eliminate them from stealing your Joy!

What has been your personal definition of "joy" up until now? What have you been counting on to produce joy in your life? Is it approval? Contentment? Things? People?

Is it anything as eternal as your God, who always IS?

How does a personal relationship with God change your perspective of joy?

I know it alters mine completely! He is the backdrop we need to set the stage for our show of life!

I can still remember the words of the song I often sang as a child:

"I've got the Joy Joy Joy Joy down in my heart? WHERE? Down in my heart to stay..."

That "J" in Joy was always capitalized...and until my adulthood I never noticed or even understood why. It's because it's HIM that is down in my heart to stay! The One, True God!

I have been through a lot since first singing those words. But you know what? God's truth remains the same thought it ALL. If we want to experience Joy, we must experience God! We look in a lot of wrong places for Joy but the only right place is in a personal relationship with God.

Lord, remind us to live each day against the "backdrop of eternity." Your presence in our lives. Our problems look so much bigger with out it. We pray that, in every circumstance, we would choose true Joy, knowing that You are in control.

In Jesus' name,  
Amen.

Grace & Agape, Amber