

# 5-Day Study Guide – Unstoppable Joy!

**Speaker:** Chris Pollard

**Main Scripture:** Acts 8:1–8

**Keyword Theme:** *Unstoppable Joy in Christ*

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## Introduction

There is something powerful about opening your Bible and letting God's Word speak directly into your life. This 5-Day Study Guide is designed to help you dig deeper into the theme of *Unstoppable Joy* from Chris Pollard's sermon. It can be used individually for personal reflection, as a family devotional tool, or within Roads Groups for group discussion and prayer. Joy is more than a feeling—it is a spiritual strength that flows from Jesus and sustains us through every season. As you study, you'll discover how joy anchors your faith, transforms your perspective, and equips you to face life's challenges with hope. Whether you're reading these scriptures alone, with your family, or in a Roads Group, ***allow this time in God's Word to refresh your heart and fill you with the unshakable joy of the Lord.***

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## Word Study: Joy (*chedvah*)

**Hebrew Word:** חֵדְוָה (*chedvah*) – Strong's H2304

**Meaning:** Gladness, joy, or rejoicing that flows from delight and worship. It is a God-centered joy that does not depend on circumstances but on the strength and presence of the Lord.

**Scripture Use:** Appears in Nehemiah 8:10 (*"The joy of the Lord is your strength"*) and 1 Chronicles 16:27 (*"Strength and joy are in His place"*).

**Application:** This kind of joy is not just an emotion but a spiritual force rooted in God's nature. It calls us to rejoice in Him regardless of trials, knowing that His joy sustains and strengthens us.

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## Sermon Overview

In Acts 8, the early church experienced intense persecution—yet the gospel spread, miracles happened, and *"there was great joy in that city."* Pastor Chris Pollard challenges us to pursue joy that is rooted in Christ, not in temporary circumstances or fleeting happiness. True joy is a powerful weapon against the enemy and a testimony of God's presence in our lives.

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# Why This Study?

Opening your Bible and digging into God's Word equips you to live with a joy that is unshakable. Studying this message further will help you:

- Understand the difference between happiness and biblical joy.
  - Learn how joy strengthens you through trials (Nehemiah 8:10).
  - Discover how to guard against offense and bitterness, which rob joy.
  - Be encouraged to live as a witness of Christ's joy, impacting those around you.
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## Day 1 – Joy That Cannot Be Stolen

**Big Idea:** Joy is not just an emotion but a gift and weapon that cannot be stolen when rooted in Jesus.

**Focus Paragraph:** True joy is not dependent on your circumstances. On this first day, reflect on how joy is your God-given strength and how it empowers you to stand firm when life is challenging.

### Scripture:

*"The joy of the Lord is your strength."* — Nehemiah 8:10

### Sermon Quote:

"Joy isn't a fleeting emotion—it's a weapon against the enemy. The joy of the Lord is your strength, and you can't manufacture it; it comes from Him alone."

### Discussion Questions

- **New Christians:** How does this verse show where joy truly comes from? What other verse reminds you of this truth?
- **Mature Christians:** How can joy be a weapon against the enemy's attacks? Which scripture gives you confidence in this?
- **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** How have you seen joy make a difference in your school or friendships? Which Bible verse encourages you most?
- **Families with Young Children:** How can you show your kids that joy is deeper than feeling happy? Which verse could you read together?

- **Families with Teenagers:** What practical ways can your family pursue joy together? What scripture can you stand on as a family?

**Word Study Reflection:** How does understanding *chedvah* as God-centered joy deepen your understanding of Nehemiah 8:10?

## Application Steps

- **New Christians:** Memorize Nehemiah 8:10 and ask God each morning to fill you with His joy.
  - **Mature Christians:** Reflect on a past trial where joy gave you strength and share that testimony with someone this week.
  - **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** Write down three things that bring you joy in Jesus and share one with a friend.
  - **Families with Young Children:** Create a “joy jar” with your kids where each person adds a note about something joyful each day.
  - **Families with Teenagers:** Choose one evening to talk about where each family member saw God’s joy that day.
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# Day 2 – Joy in Persecution

**Big Idea:** Persecution or hardship cannot stop the gospel, and it cannot stop your joy when you stand in Christ.

**Focus Paragraph:** The early church grew stronger under persecution because their joy and faith were unshakable. Today, consider how God can use your challenges as a platform to reveal His joy and strength to others.

### Scripture:

*“Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.” — Acts 8:4*

### Sermon Quote:

“Persecution can’t stop the gospel. What if the very platform God wants to use to advance His kingdom is the persecution we face today?”

## Discussion Questions

- **New Christians:** How can you find joy in challenges like the early church? Which verse strengthens you?
- **Mature Christians:** How can you respond to trials with joy instead of fear? What scripture helps you stand firm?
- **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** How can you stand for your faith when others don't? Which verse reminds you to stay strong?
- **Families with Young Children:** How can you help your kids learn to trust God when things are hard? Which Bible story encourages this?
- **Families with Teenagers:** What does your family need to change to reflect joy during tough seasons? What scripture could guide you?

**Word Study Reflection:** How does seeing joy as *chedvah*—a joy that flows from God's strength—help you face difficulties differently?

## Application Steps

- **New Christians:** Journal about one area of life where you need courage to share your faith.
- **Mature Christians:** Pray for believers around the world facing persecution and write down a prayer of encouragement.
- **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** Share one way you can be bold about your faith this week.
- **Families with Young Children:** Read Acts 8:4–8 together and talk about how God works even when life is hard.
- **Families with Teenagers:** Choose a worship song about joy and sing it together as a family.

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# Day 3 – Connected to the True Source

**Big Idea:** Joy flows from being connected to Jesus, not from external circumstances or possessions.

**Focus Paragraph:** Real joy cannot be bought or earned—it flows from staying close to Jesus. On this day, reflect on how daily time with God strengthens your joy and refreshes your heart.

## Scripture:

*"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."* — John 15:11

## Sermon Quote:

"Happiness fades, but true joy flows from being connected to Jesus—the unshakable source that never runs dry."

## Discussion Questions

- **New Christians:** How does this verse show Jesus' promise of joy? What other verse speaks to this truth?
- **Mature Christians:** How can you keep your spiritual "joy tank" full daily? Which scripture reminds you of this?
- **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** What do you turn to when you feel empty? What verse points you back to Jesus?
- **Families with Young Children:** How can you make joy in Jesus a regular part of your family conversations? Which verse can you learn together?
- **Families with Teenagers:** How can your family recognize when you're running low on joy? Which scripture helps you refill?

**Word Study Reflection:** How does *chedvah* remind you that joy is meant to be complete and lasting when it comes from God?

## Application Steps

- **New Christians:** Set aside 10 minutes today to pray and thank Jesus for giving you joy.
  - **Mature Christians:** Create a short list of daily habits (worship, prayer, scripture) that refill your joy.
  - **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** Spend time reading John 15 and write one verse that stands out.
  - **Families with Young Children:** Draw a picture with your kids of "Jesus filling our hearts with joy."
  - **Families with Teenagers:** Plan a family devotional on John 15:11 and talk about staying connected to Jesus.
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# Day 4 – Let Go of Offense and Bitterness

**Big Idea:** Offense and unforgiveness rob joy. Freedom comes when we forgive and choose unity.

**Focus Paragraph:** Bitterness and offense weigh down the heart and block the flow of joy. Use this day to invite God to search your heart and help you release anything that's keeping you from joy.

## Scripture:

*"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." —*  
Ephesians 4:3

## Sermon Quote:

"Offense will rob you of your joy. Some people carry it for years, but joy is restored when you choose to forgive."

## Discussion Questions

- **New Christians:** How does the Bible show that forgiveness restores joy? What verse encourages you to forgive?
- **Mature Christians:** How can choosing unity release God's power in the church? Which scripture speaks to unity?
- **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** Is there someone you need to forgive to restore your joy? What verse helps you forgive?
- **Families with Young Children:** How can you teach your kids to say "I'm sorry" and forgive quickly? Which story from the Bible can you share?
- **Families with Teenagers:** What could holding on to bitterness do to your family's joy? What verse encourages you to let go?

**Word Study Reflection:** How does understanding *chedvah* help you see forgiveness as a path back to God's strength and joy?

## Application Steps

- **New Christians:** Pray for strength to forgive someone who has hurt you.
- **Mature Christians:** Write a letter (even if you don't send it) releasing someone from offense.
- **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** Text or talk to someone you need to forgive and tell them you release it.

- **Families with Young Children:** Practice saying “I forgive you” with your kids and talk about why forgiveness brings joy.
  - **Families with Teenagers:** Discuss as a family one way you can pursue unity and peace this week.
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## Day 5 – Joy as a Lifestyle

**Big Idea:** Joy is not a feeling but a lifestyle choice grounded in God’s presence.

**Focus Paragraph:** Joy isn’t something we pick up when things are going well—it’s a daily choice to live in God’s presence. Today, consider how cultivating joy can shape your relationships and outlook every single day.

**Scripture:**

*“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy.” —*  
Psalm 16:11

**Sermon Quote:**

“Joy is serious business in heaven. It’s not optional—it’s how the kingdom of God is displayed through us.”

### Discussion Questions

- **New Christians:** How does being in God’s presence fill you with joy? Which verse reassures you of this?
- **Mature Christians:** How can you model joy as a daily lifestyle to others? What scripture guides this practice?
- **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** What’s one step you can take to start each day with joy? Which verse motivates you?
- **Families with Young Children:** How can your family practice being thankful and joyful each day? What verse can you memorize together?
- **Families with Teenagers:** How can joy be a testimony to your friends or school? Which scripture inspires you?

**Word Study Reflection:** How does *chedvah* remind you that true joy comes from God’s presence and should be lived out daily?

## Application Steps

- **New Christians:** Begin each morning by thanking God for three things that bring joy.
  - **Mature Christians:** Identify one area where you need to choose joy and declare it in prayer daily.
  - **Jr. & Sr. High Students:** Commit to a “joy challenge” by encouraging one person every day this week.
  - **Families with Young Children:** Start a bedtime routine where each family member says one joyful thing from the day.
  - **Families with Teenagers:** End the week with a family prayer of gratitude, asking God to keep your joy strong.
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## Reflection – Living Out Unstoppable Joy

As you complete this study, take a moment to reflect on the ways joy has impacted your heart this week. Joy is a daily decision to remain anchored in Jesus, no matter what life brings. Consider journaling about what you’ve learned and share one thing God has shown you with a friend or family member. Close with a simple prayer: “Lord, help me live out the unstoppable joy You’ve placed within me, so others may see Your light through my life.”