

JOYFUL FAMILIES

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[Philippians 4:4-9](#)

Rejoice in all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your household.
Deuteronomy 26:11

Some religious people are so sour that you'd think they were baptized in lemon juice, says one author. They are so uptight that they squeak when they walk and whine when they talk. But does God save and bless in order to make you and your family grumpy? No, God says to "rejoice in all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your household" (Deuteronomy 26:11).

Passing faith to children involves many things, such as telling them the stories of the Bible, explaining the way of salvation in Christ, teaching God's commands for holy living, and correcting bad behavior through discipline. These things are needed but are not enough. In fact, they may do more harm than good if joy is in short supply. If a home is religious but joyless, it can drive children away from Christ. But if parents are full of God's joy and set a cheerful tone, the happiness of the home will attract children to Christ and make everything else the parents do more effective. Flourishing families are joyful families.

Nobody's perfect. There will still be times when we scowl and growl. But let's aim to smile more than we snarl, compliment more than we criticize, and count our blessings more than we complain about our problems. "Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God [who] shine like stars" (Philippians 2:14-15).

PRAYER--Father in heaven, shine your joy into our lives and make that joy to shine from us, so that our families and neighbors may be drawn to your light, for Jesus' sake. Amen.