

This week Pastor Andy tells us about "Living the Good Life." This is the first installment on the new nine-part series "Living the Life You've Always Wanted." Pastor Andy begins by pointing out that, although as part of God's plan, life has "joy" as its foundation, you cannot always see joy through the circumstances in which you find yourself. If, then, joy comes within the context of God's plan for you, what can you do to realize that joy?

Pastor Andy uses the acrostic J.O.Y.F.U.L. to present six steps you can take to experience God's joy in your life.

First, *jettison* all of the regrets you've been holding onto about your past. The apostle Paul, in Philippians 3:13, tells you that is exactly what he did.

Second, like the apostle Paul, *omit* worrying about your future. God has a plan for you and as you follow His plan, you will find that He will always take care of your needs.

God's plan for you brings joy, but to experience that plan and that joy, you have to practice the third step, which is to *yield* to God's purpose for your life.

As you yield to God's plan, consciously *focus* on what is good. The focus in this fourth step is an action verb, not a passive one, and as you concentrate on the good, you will no longer absorb all of the negativity in the world around you.

In step five, you *use* your life to help others rather than concentrating solely on your own needs and desires. The world prefers you look out only for yourself, but that's a real "joy-killer." As you look outward rather than inward, those you're helping become your reward and a source of joy.

Finally, Pastor Andy says that you need to consciously *Learn* to always rejoice. "Rejoicing in all things" is actually a decision you choose to make each moment in your life. Rejoicing is not a feeling; it is the response you make to everything that God is doing in your life.

As you do these things, you experience the joy God has for your life. Life will be full, exciting, and rewarding. Do you want the joy of God in your life? Will you go after that joy by taking these steps now?