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Act 7: Joyful Joyful

by Christina Johnston

Joy is the gigantic secret of the generous. But it's hidden in plain sight, and easy to reach. How? Simply, find those generous acts that you know bring you and other people joy, and then do them more. Is it cooking meals for friends? Is it picking out the perfect gift for an acquaintance who'd never see it coming? Find the joy that sustains your sacrificial kindness.

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

(2 Corinthians 9:7 NIV)

As a professional opera singer, I'm blessed to be able to see the effect the music I perform has on my audience. People are often touched, tearful, rapt, their spirits lifted. I watch their faces as I sing and it gives me a warm feeling.

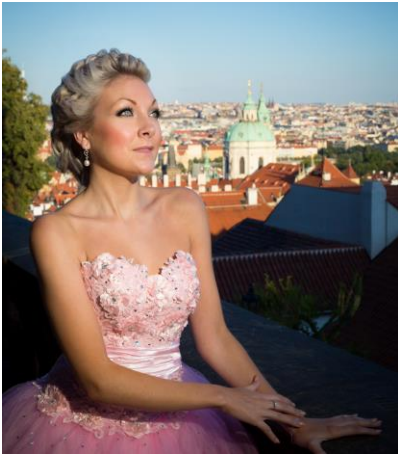
The Lord delights in giving to his people and, in turn, I find joy when I give. I believe that generous and cheerful giving changes our mindset. The more you do it, the happier and more joyful you become.

In my career and my Christian life, I've found that the key to living generously and joyously is in having a heart that delights in the Lord. When we find our purpose and joy in Christ, we begin to open our eyes to what real joy is, what the Lord wants from us and how he delights in seeing us joyful and helping others.

God richly provides everything for our enjoyment. It isn't his desire to withhold or diminish our pleasure. In fact, he wants us to experience true pleasure. He wants us to experience the joy of being rich in goodness and generosity. In this Bible verse, Paul echoes the sentiment so prevalent throughout the scriptures: giving joyfully of ourselves now is an investment in eternity.

My challenge to you today is to go out and immerse yourself in the joyfulness of giving. Give your time to a friend who hasn't seen you in a while, surprise a loved one with a spontaneous gift or try volunteering.

See how joyful you feel afterwards and make it a habit – cheerfully and joyously.



Christina Johnston is an internationally renowned coloratura soprano. She won a scholarship at 18 to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and made her operatic debut in 2012.

Christina regularly sings with various conductors and orchestras all over Europe and has sung on numerous solo tours with orchestras around Czech Republic, Slovakia, China and South America. Last year she was nominated for a Classic BRIT Award for the Sound of Classical Poll.

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Choose how to complete this act...



GREEN OPTION:

Do something that costs you nothing but brings someone else joy: a walk, a view, a book.



YELLOW OPTION:

Think of a fun evening plan that will bring someone else joy as well as you. Plan it, and get inviting.



**RED
OPTION:**

Give something that costs you, and isn't particularly joyful, but brings joy to someone else.

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