

Church of Joy

In Acts, Luke emphasizes joy as a primary characteristic of the early church's life and mission:

- Disciples rejoice that they are considered worthy to suffer for Jesus's name (5:41).
- There is "great joy in that city" when the gospel comes to Samaria (8:8).
- The Ethiopian eunuch goes "on his way rejoicing" after being baptized (8:39).
- Barnabas rejoices when he witnesses God's grace in Antioch (11:23).
- The disciples are "filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (13:52).
- God blesses even pagan idol-worshippers by filling their hearts with joy (14:15–17).
- The conversion of gentiles brings "great joy to all the believers" (15:3).
- The gentiles rejoice when they hear the decision of the Jerusalem council (15:31).
- A jailer and his family rejoice after they are baptized (16:33–34).

This is a prominent theme in the Gospel of Luke as well (see 1:14, 44, 47, 58; 2:10; 6:23; 10:17, 20, 21; 13:17; 15:3–10, 32; 24:41, 52).