



# Finding Joy Beyond the Game



Explore how men can reclaim joy, relationships, and Sabbath rest beyond sports obsession through Scripture and reflection.

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## Introduction

Welcome to a transformative journey for men seeking true joy beyond the highs and lows of scores and games. In a culture where sports often dominate time, energy, and emotions, it's easy to find Sabbath and relationships relegated to the sidelines. This 7-day study offers biblical wisdom and heartfelt reflection to help you rediscover joy that lasts—rooted not in the scoreboard, but in God's peace and presence.

*Sports can be thrilling and fun, but when they become an obsession, they can steal your Sabbath rest and strain your relationships with family, friends, and even God.* This study gently challenges you to examine your priorities, embracing the richness of life God intends.

We will explore passages that encourage rest, love, and joy that transcends fleeting pleasures. You'll find practical encouragement to set healthy boundaries, nourish deep connections, and reclaim your soul's Sabbath. Each day invites honest reflection, prayer, and journaling to help you apply biblical truths to your daily routine.

As you step into this week, be open to God's grace and guidance, remembering **joy is not found in the game alone, but in the Player who sustains all life.** May this study inspire a renewed sense of balance, peace, and fulfilling relationships.





## Day 1: 🏛️ Recognizing Imbalance



## Your Verse

*Ecclesiastes 3:1 - "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens."*

## Supporting Scriptures

- *Mark 6:31 - "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."*
- *Psalms 127:2 - "It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil."*



Day 1: 🏆 Recognizing Imbalance

## Devotional: Seeing the Need for Balance

**Many men find themselves caught in a cycle where sports take up more time, attention, and energy than intended.** While competitions, scores, and games bring excitement, an obsession can disrupt the balance God designed for us. Ecclesiastes reminds us there is a proper time for every activity — including rest. Jesus Himself prioritized retreat and quiet to rejuvenate.

*Reflect on your current pattern. Are your days crowded with sports to the detriment of worship, rest, or relationships?* Psalm 127 points out the futility of relentless toil without respite. Finding joy requires wisdom to balance passions and priorities.

Today is about awareness. Recognize where imbalance might exist and invite God to illuminate areas needing realignment. This honesty is the first step toward reclaiming joy and Sabbath rest.



## Reflect and Apply

1. In what ways has sports excitement taken priority over your rest or relationships?

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2. How does God's rhythm of work and rest challenge your current lifestyle?

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3. What emotions surface when you consider limiting time spent on sports?

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# Journaling Prompts

1. List your typical weekly activities and time spent on sports versus rest and family.

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2. Write about a time when sports positively and negatively impacted your relationships.

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3. Pray and journal what you want God to reveal about your priorities this week.

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Day 1: 🏴‍☠️ Recognizing Imbalance

## Prayer for Today

**Lord, help me see clearly where my time and heart have been out of balance. Teach me to embrace Your rhythm of work and rest. May I place relationships and Your presence above temporary thrills. Restore joy to my soul as I turn toward Your gentle guidance. *Show me how to live fully without allowing any passion to consume me.* Amen.** 🙏 🕊️ ⚖️





## Day 2: 🐦 Embracing Sabbath Rest



## Your Verse

*Exodus 20:8-10 - "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."*

## Supporting Scriptures

- *Hebrews 4:9-10 - "There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their own work."*
- *Matthew 11:28 - "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*



## Devotional: Rediscovering Sabbath's Peace

**The Sabbath is a divine invitation to pause, rest, and reconnect with God.** When sports consume our Sabbath hours, we miss the deep restoration God intends. Exodus instructs us to keep the Sabbath holy — a sacred time of rest and worship, not to be filled with distractions or obsessive pursuits.

*Hebrews clarifies that God's rest is more than physical; it's entering into spiritual peace, a ceasing from our exhausting efforts.* Jesus extends a personal invitation for all who are weary to find rest in Him.

Reclaiming your Sabbath means saying "no"—even to beloved games—to say "yes" to God's renewing presence. What transformation might happen if your next Sabbath was truly set apart in His peace?



## Reflect and Apply

1. What does keeping the Sabbath holy look like in your life?

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2. How might your relationship with God deepen by honoring Sabbath rest?

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3. What obstacles keep you from resting on a true spiritual Sabbath?

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# Journaling Prompts

1. Describe how you currently observe Sabbath and any changes you desire.

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2. Write about moments when you have felt God’s rest deeply.

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3. Commit in writing one practical way you will guard your Sabbath this week.

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Day 2: 🕊 Embracing Sabbath Rest

## Prayer for Today

**Father, teach me to honor the Sabbath as You intended.** Help me resist distractions and obsessions that steal my rest. May I find true peace and renewal in Your presence each week. *Lead me into Your rest, Lord, and restore my soul.* Thank You for this gift of Sabbath joy. Amen. 🌿🕊🙏





## Day 3: Prioritizing Relationships





## Your Verse

*Ephesians 5:25 - "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."*

## Supporting Scriptures

- *1 Corinthians 13:4-7 - "Love is patient, love is kind... It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."*
- *Colossians 3:23 - "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord."*



## Devotional: Choosing Love Over Distraction

**When competition and games dominate, relationships can suffer silently.** Ephesians reminds husbands and men to love sacrificially, reflecting Christ's love. This kind of love requires intentional time, attention, and patience.

*1 Corinthians gives us the qualities love embodies—patience, kindness, and perseverance—all potentially challenged when our focus is elsewhere.* Colossians encourages wholehearted effort in all spheres, including family.

Ask yourself: Are my loved ones getting the best of me, or just what's left after the game? Reclaiming joy includes prioritizing relational investments. Today, commit to love actively, not passively, choosing connection over distraction.



## Reflect and Apply

1. How have sports or hobbies affected your ability to love and serve your family?

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2. What does sacrificial love look like in your daily interactions?

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3. Where can you intentionally shift focus toward deepening relationships?

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# Journaling Prompts

1. Write down ways your family or close relationships have been impacted recently.

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2. List specific actions you can take to demonstrate sacrificial love.

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3. Reflect on barriers that keep you from giving your full attention to loved ones.

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Day 3: 💬 Prioritizing Relationships

## Prayer for Today

**Lord Jesus, shape my heart to love as You love.** Help me put aside distractions and be fully present with those I cherish. Teach me patience and kindness even when I'm tempted to prioritize other joys. May my relationships flourish through Your grace and by my willing choice. Amen. 💙💛🏡





## Day 4: 🙏 Cultivating Spiritual Joy



Day 4: 🙏 Cultivating Spiritual Joy

## Your Verse

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

## Supporting Scriptures

- *Psalm 16:11 - "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence."*
- *Galatians 5:22 - "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness."*



Day 4: 🙏 Cultivating Spiritual Joy

## Devotional: Joy That Lasts From God Alone

**True joy is rooted in the Lord, not external achievements or entertainments.** Nehemiah reminds us that the Lord's joy empowers and strengthens us. When we root our happiness in Him rather than outcomes or games, we discover a stability nothing can shake.

*Psalm 16 promises that joy is found abundantly in God's presence. Galatians highlights joy as the fruit produced in us by the Spirit—an inner quality, not dependent on outside events.*

As you reflect today, consider how your joy might shift from external highs to this deep spiritual wellspring. Challenge yourself to seek the Lord's presence daily and nurture the fruit He grows within you.





## Reflect and Apply

1. Where have you placed your source of joy recently?

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2. How would your life change if your joy came from God rather than games?

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3. What spiritual practices help you experience the fruit of the Spirit?

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Day 4: 🙏 Cultivating Spiritual Joy

## Journaling Prompts

1. Recall moments when God's presence brought you true joy.

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2. Identify distractions that pull your joy away from God.

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3. Plan practical ways to encounter God's joy daily this week.

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Day 4: 🙏 Cultivating Spiritual Joy

## Prayer for Today

**Father, fill me with Your joy and peace that no score can match.** Help me rely on You as my strength and delight. Teach me to seek Your Spirit's fruit daily and to let go of fleeting pleasures that diminish my soul's happiness. In Jesus' name, Amen. 🙌🎉❤️





## Day 5: Guarding Your Heart



## Your Verse

*Proverbs 4:23 – "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."*

## Supporting Scriptures

- *Philippians 4:8 – "Whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable—think about such things."*
- *Romans 12:2 – "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."*



## Devotional: Protecting the Heart and Mind

**Your heart directs every part of your life and choices.** Proverbs warns to guard it carefully. When obsession with sports or any passion grows unchecked, it can warp your values, actions, and priorities.

*Philippians counsels focusing thoughts on what is pure and lovely—redirecting the mind away from unhealthy fixation.* Romans challenges transformation through renewed thinking, not conformity to worldly obsessions.

Today, examine your heart and mind. Are they centered on healthy, God-honoring truths? Guarding your heart means setting boundaries and cultivating thought patterns that nourish your soul and strengthen relationships.



## Reflect and Apply

1. What occupies your thoughts the most during the day?

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2. How might controlling passion for sports protect your heart and relationships?

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3. What mental shifts can renew your mind according to God's Word?

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# Journaling Prompts

1. Write down recurring thoughts or feelings about sports obsession.

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2. List ways you can redirect your focus to what Philippians encourages.

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3. Describe a plan to guard your heart and mind this week.

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## Day 5: 🛡️ Guarding Your Heart

## Prayer for Today

**Dear God, help me guard my heart from unhealthy obsessions.** Renew my mind to focus on what honors You. Give me wisdom to set boundaries and strength to resist distractions that steal my peace and joy. May my life reflect Your purity and love. Amen. 🛡️ 🧠 💡





## Day 6: Strengthening Brotherhood



Day 6: 🧡 Strengthening Brotherhood

## Your Verse

*Proverbs 27:17 - "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."*

## Supporting Scriptures

- *Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 - "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor..."*
- *Hebrews 10:24-25 - "Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."*



Day 6: 💛 Strengthening Brotherhood

## Devotional: Building Godly Friendships

**Men often benefit from community that challenges and supports growth.** Proverbs illustrates how friends sharpen one another—a relational sharpening that can protect against obsession and encourage balance.

*Ecclesiastes highlights the strength found in partnership, while Hebrews urges believers to motivate each other to love and good works.*

Consider the men in your life who build you up. How can you cultivate brotherhood that encourages healthy priorities, accountability, and encouragement beyond shared hobbies? Today, seek connection that strengthens your walk with God and others.



## Reflect and Apply

1. Who sharpens and strengthens you as a man of faith?

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2. How do your friendships impact your priorities and joy?

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3. What steps can you take to deepen brotherhood that encourages balance?

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# Journaling Prompts

1. List men in your life who influence you positively.

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2. Write about a time someone helped you refocus on important things.

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3. Plan an intentional step to connect more deeply with supportive friends.

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Day 6: 🧡 Strengthening Brotherhood

## Prayer for Today

**Lord, thank You for men who sharpen and encourage me.** Help me be a good friend and to seek godly fellowship that promotes balance and joy. Connect me with brothers who spur me toward love and discipline. May our relationships honor You and build lasting strength. Amen. 🧡 🔥 🙏





## Day 7: Living with Purpose and Joy





Day 7: 🌅 Living with Purpose and Joy

## Your Verse

*John 10:10 – "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*

## Supporting Scriptures

- *Psalm 37:4 – "Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart."*
- *Romans 15:13 – "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him."*



## Devotional: Abundant Life Beyond the Game

Jesus promises a full, abundant life beyond temporary pleasures and distractions. True joy springs from delighting in God and trusting Him with your desires.

*Psalm 37 assures us that taking delight in the Lord aligns our hearts, and Romans blesses us with hope, joy, and peace.* Living with purpose means intentionally choosing what nourishes life rather than drains it.

As your 7-day journey concludes, commit to stepping forward with renewed joy—beyond scores and games—focused on God's eternal purposes and meaningful relationships. Embrace this abundant life every day.



## Reflect and Apply

1. What would a full life with Jesus look like for you daily?

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2. How can you cultivate delight in the Lord over earthly pleasures?

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3. What practical changes can sustain long-term spiritual joy and purpose?

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Day 7: 🌅 Living with Purpose and Joy

# Journaling Prompts

1. Write your vision for living joyfully and purposefully with God.

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2. List habits to cultivate that deepen delight and trust in Him.

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3. Pray over your heart's desires and surrender them to God's plan.

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Day 7: 🌅 Living with Purpose and Joy

## Prayer for Today

**Jesus, thank You for the abundant life You offer.** Help me embrace joy and purpose beyond the temporary. Fill me with hope and peace as I trust in You daily. May my life reflect Your fullness and love in all I do. Amen. 🌅 ❤️ 🙏





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