

A decorative white floral border with intricate scrollwork and leaf patterns surrounds the text. At the top center, there is a small decorative flourish above a horizontal line.

A MOTHER'S VERSION OF PHILIPPIANS 4:12-13

I know what it is to have children crying and whining, husband watching television loud enough to drown out the aforementioned crying and whining. And I know what it is to enjoy quietly preparing a meal for just my beloved man and me. And this is what I've realized. Joy is a choice—not based on situation or circumstance, having nothing to do with sick children, clothes that smell like spit up, and tweens/teens who are speaking a language I do not understand. This joy isn't dependent on my husband's mood when he comes home or my children's desire (or lack thereof) to set the table or share their toys. This joy doesn't require a gourmet meal or the perfect dessert. Nope, **THIS JOY** is available simply by looking around—at messy faces and dirty hands, at shoes of all sizes spread all over the floor, at a husband who gives a knowing smile above the fray, at a table where we gather hands and hearts—**THIS JOY** is mine for the embracing.