All Glorious Within

Fruit of the Spirit, Part Two:

~ Joy ~

May-August 2013

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“The King’s daughter is all glorious within . . .” Psalm 45:13
About All Glorious Within

All Glorious Within is a publication for Christian young ladies that began in January 2006. It is compiled, edited, and published three times per year by Karissa Hiebert. Co-editors are Abe and Bernice Hiebert, who approve and improve each issue, giving many suggestions and much valued advice.

We welcome new subscribers! If you have friends or relatives that might be interested in receiving All Glorious Within, you may request brochures or sample issues for them. Free brochures available upon request. Gift certificates also available.

Our Mission

Our goal is to provide conservative, wholesome reading material to inspire girls in their Christian walk, endeavoring to maintain the centrality of Jesus Christ. If you have questions or concerns, please let us know personally about them. Suggestions are appreciated!

If you come across anything in All Glorious Within that is unBiblical, opinionated, or does not pass the tests of Philippians 4:8 and Colossians 2:8, please let us know about it. (Note that we do not necessarily endorse every word of each article.)

This issue of this publication has been approved by the co-editors, my parents (Abe and Bernice Hiebert).

Submissions

We gladly welcome submissions . . . please send articles, poetry, testimonies, reviews, homemaking tips, recipes, wedding/baby announcements, and other such contributions! We do not publish advertisements.

All submissions must be approved by the co-editors (editor's parents), and we ask that everything submitted be honoring to the Lord, based on the Word of God, and corresponding to Philippians 4:8. Please include information such as titles, authors, and publishers' information, where applicable. Thank you.

Submission Deadline for Next Issue:
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Contact Information

Box 2
Lowe Farm, MB
R0G 1E0
1 (204) 746-6377
editor@allgloriouswithin.org

~ Website ~

www.allgloriouswithin.org

Back Issues Available

To help cover costs of printing and postage, please include a donation with your order if possible. Thank you! Note – some issues may not be available.

Christian Chronicle (previous publication, 3 column format):
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Volume 2, Issue 4: Home Life
Volume 2, Issue 5: Humility

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Fruit of the Spirit Series:
Volume 8, Issue 1: Love
“Joy means the perfect fulfillment of that for which I was created and regenerated, not the successful doing of a thing. The joy our Lord had lay in doing what the Father sent Him to do . . .”

- Oswald Chambers -

“Here is no proof of the reality of God’s love and the blessing He bestows, which people so quickly feel the strength of; as when the joy of God overcomes all the trials of life. . . . With a heart full of joy no work can make us weary and no burden can depress us; God Himself is our strength and song.”

- Andrew Murray -

Would you know earth’s highest happiness, Would you know its greatest blessedness, Would you know its truest joyfulness, Make some other heart rejoice.

Pleasant smiles will cheer a drooping heart, Kindly words relieve a bitter smart, Helping hands to weakness strength impart, Make some other heart rejoice.

Many hearts are crushed with bitter woe, Many hearts with grief are bending low, Many hearts need help you can bestow, Make some other heart rejoice.

Give a pleasant smile, speak a kindly word, Lend a hand to help a brother.

Give a pleasant smile, speak a kindly word, Lend a hand to help another.

I thank Thee more that all our joy Is touched with pain, That shadows fall on brightest hours, That thorns remain; So that earth’s bliss may be our guide And not our chain.

I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou has kept The best in store: We have enough, yet not too much To long for more; A yearning for a deeper peace Not known before.
Greetings in the name of our King and welcome to the 25th issue of All Glorious Within... and the second issue in our Fruit of the Spirit series! We are still accepting your fruit photos for the front covers and design of this series, as well as any submissions you may have. Our next theme is Peace.

Our family sold our house in July and moved a few miles away, where we are currently renting. Because we’re still in the area, our address has not changed, and we hope our phone number will also remain the same. This issue was worked on here and there in July/August in the midst of a few busy weeks of packing and moving.

At the end of January I was at a youth Bible school, where we had a series of messages on the fruitful Christian life. Here are some of my notes from “The Spirit’s Fruit of Joy” by Bro. Elvin Martin:

“The world is like a mirror, Reflecting what you do, And if your face is smiling, It smiles right back at you.” It takes 42 muscles to frown, 13 to smile. ☺

“You cannot glorify God better than by a calm, joyous life.” - Spurgeon - If we can, in the midst of stress, strain, problems, etc., stay calm and joyful, that speaks of God’s grace in us. - “Let the world see you have a good Master . . . do not let it trouble your spirit. Rest in Him . . .” -Spurgeon

John 4:14 - We need a sanctified joy that will carry us through circumstances, that will last, that isn’t giddy or of ourselves.

Problems are real, we have griefs in life, but God is real too. God wants us to cheer others even in the midst of our own pain or sorrow.

The Basis of Our Joy:

1) The cheer of forgiveness. Matt. 9:2 – Why do so many professing Christians lack joy? If your sins have been forgiven, you have a basis for joy! No feelings? You may have to exercise joy, and exercise faith. - It Is Well With My Soul - You don’t want anything to master your life but Jesus. Don’t let anything control you.
2) The cheer of companionship – Mark 6:49-50. Is your life like this? On a sea, and deep in your soul there’s a storm, or lonelines, or everything seems against you. Jesus wants to be your companion. Though it is storming in your life, He says, “It is I.”
3) The cheer of His overcoming (that He is King of Kings) - John 16:33 - Tribulation: pressure, burdens, troubles . . .

Joy Maintained:

1) Look up! Heb. 12:2 (if you look down you will see ‘de-feat’) 2) The Holy Spirit will not override our ability to control our thoughts. How much of your thoughts are wrapped around yourself? How much do you reason? Beware of reasonings. II Cor. 10:5 3) Being rooted in the Word – John 15:11. Beware what you read (other than the Word); what you read affects your heart.
4) Abide in Jesus in prayer and in the Word.

The Loss of Joy:

1) Sin.
2) Unmet expectations.
3) Grief. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

The Power of Joy:

1) Joy brings strength in times of testing - Heb. 12:2. Look beyond the cross, the test. 2) Joy brings strength in pain and sorrow. Jesus cares and will be with you in difficulties. - All things work together for good.
3) Joy brings strength in time of prosperity. Joy expressed in gratitude to God can provide spiritual power in a culture of prosperity and materialism. Our joy is empty and wrong if we are only “joyful” in prosperous or easy times. I Thess. 5:18
4) Joy makes a strong witness. “The religion that makes a man look sick won’t heal the world.” “Notify your face” if you want to reach the world!

God needs to be big and our problems small.
and that needs to be real and natural and come out of our lives. ~ Joy is something that multiplies when divided. ~ We need to be genuine. Joy speaks of Christ’s character, and that He is in control even if your life is out of control.

Notes from our discussion time after:

Love is the bond of perfectness . . . perfect love casts out fear . . . absence of fear brings joy.

What is the devil’s substitute for joy? Pleasure.

The difference between happiness and joy: When you go through grief, you find the difference. (John D. Martin) The joy of the Lord shouldn’t leave us even in grief and difficulties. When joy goes away, the cause could be sin, a guilty conscience, a focus off of Christ.

For joy Jesus endured the cross. What keeps us enduring? We know Christ is by our side. We know God will refine us through trials [example of testing jets with extreme heat and cold]. Seeing how God’s faithfulness has led us in the past - I Thess. 4:13,16 ~ There’s no choice; I don’t want to go backward, I want to go forward . . . keeps us going on and cuts out the possibility of giving up. Accountability. PRAYER.

All the trials that come to us have gone through God’s inspection table. He knows what we can handle.

How do you look to Christ? Prayer – Realizing your position in Him – Choosing to thank God (when we’re not thankful, we don’t have joy; we must have joy to thank Him when we’re going through something hard). An unthankful person is a selfish person. Thankfulness helps you overcome discouragement, helps you get through trials, changes your perspectives.

JOY ~ its source is in Christ. Hebrews 12 is right after the faith chapter, yet we are to look to Jesus, not those men of faith. They got discouraged; Jesus didn’t . . . we need to look to Him so we don’t get discouraged.

Bless your parents; don’t criticize them; be thankful/grateful to them. ~ Open your mouth and testify for Christ, speak blessings, speak the truth, speak thankfulness. Romans 10:10 - When God enlightens our eyes, we need to act on it.

“I distinctly remember forgetting that account.” Life is yours; what do you want to make of it? Nominal or overflowing Christian life?

Are you despairing of your past or present? Do you have something on your conscience or aren’t you free from something? Or bitterness toward someone? To maintain a joyful life, we must become free from hindrances. The peace of God must rule in our hearts. Sin drains joy the fastest in our lives. It’s always right there. If you have a heart problem, we have a Great Physician who can do surgery. ☺

Having greater expectations on ourselves than God does won’t run on His grace but on our agenda – and there will be a lack of joy. ~ When God takes things away, there is something else He wants us to accomplish. - Rom. 14:17

Here are some excerpts from Sarah Bryant’s book, One Thing I Desire:

The Lord’s blessings upon those who cleave unto him and abide in His love are overflowing . . . Christ desires that our “joy might be full,” and indeed brimming with joy is the one who is in step with His will. . . .

(Sarah then points out that the book of Philippians has a lot on joy, yet the author, the apostle Paul, faced many hardships.) The reason for his joy was because his hope, his knowledge, and his eternal future stemmed not from any earthly pleasure, but from the core being of his life – Jesus Christ.

Joy is not an emotion of happiness nor a cheap worldly thrill – but it is the anchor of hope founded deep in our souls. . . . Joy is based in the One Who changes not (Malachi 3:6) and sustains us even in the darkest moments . . . (Psalm 30:5). . . . We must choose to walk in obedience to Christ, no matter what oppositions or emotions we encounter. . . . For our obedience, the Lord grants us His perfect joy.

And two points that appear later on, which blessed me: “Joy is the result of our obedience to trust, rejoice in, and obey the Lord in all circumstances.”

“Joy is unhindered by the storms of life, for we know that we are safe in the hands of One Who will guide us Home (John 17:24).”

(Excerpts from Chapter 5, “A Living Sacrifice,” of One Thing I Desire: To Know Christ More by Sarah L. Bryant. For more information or to order, contact KBR Ministries, 20767 Z Road, Holton, KS 66436, www.KingsBloomingRose.com)

~ Karissa
What is Joy? Is it real? Is it for me? What causes joy to spring up in my heart? Is it trust, faith that God knows all and is working all things out for my best interest? What brings joy, deepest Joy, to my heart? Ask yourself! Think for a minute… What is it that puts a spring in your step? That brings anticipation, excitement, longing? What are our hearts really after…?

How do we find Joy? What about dark times? Can I have Joy in the dark? When I don’t know what my future holds? It’s not automatic – or easy. All of us face many circumstances where true Joy is the last thing that comes naturally. But how did Jesus find joy? Physically, spiritually, emotionally, His journey was harder than anything any of us will ever face… Yet I believe Jesus had a deep Joy that surpassed His circumstances. You know what I believe brought His Joy? His surrender to His Father. His Will was totally One with the Father; He was at Rest in HIS Will… Abiding…

He had the kind of Joy that comes from being connected to the Vine! John 15:11, after the well known passage about Abiding in the Vine, says: “These things have I spoken unto you, that my Joy might remain in you, and that your Joy might be full.” Wow! I want that, don’t you? What does it take? How do we abide in HIM?

When we are faced with difficulties, I believe we have two options (at least two 😊). We can face them, wrestle with reality, bring it to the Lord, and there find rest and peace OR we can squash things, deny them, “try” to be a better Christian, feel ashamed about what’s inside, and put on a “brave face.” 😊 Whew! Who hasn’t tried the latter? We are all so sure that we are inferior Christians if we acknowledge what’s reality inside of us! Listen to this:

In 1 Peter 5:9 it says “Whom resist (talking about Satan), steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” So no matter how alone you feel, or how unholy or unspiritual your struggles may feel to you, guess what? The same things (!!) are happening to many of our brothers and sisters around the world. We are not “the only weird ones.” 😊 Let’s not be ashamed and hide from the One who knows us the best, and from others He places in our paths!

Because of this verse I know that many of you face the same things – and the same struggle to find Joy in the midst of darkness – that I have. And you know what? I’ve found that the “brave face” method never works. It never has for me. Has it for you? Do you find deep Joy and peace in it? 😊 Let’s explore this method some more and what it does (and doesn’t do) for us!

God tells us to come to Him, to lay all our burdens at His feet; He wants to carry us – for us to be anxious about nothing… and on and on! BUT, you know what the “brave face” method really does? It keeps us from coming to God! (Or we come quickly, lay our burden down for a minute, and when we’re done praying, pick it up again). Did you know that?! It is a way of saying “I can [should be able to] handle this on my own” or “I’m too ashamed to come to God about this, I shouldn’t be feeling this way.”

How many of us go for days, months, or more with things in our hearts that are screaming for attention; or situations that we really don’t understand or know what to do about, and just try to “be brave”? We have good intentions! We’re trying to be “good Christians” (grrr!!)! And we try to survive and cope and keep
pushing the “bad feelings” down when they surface. And all the while, the enemy is laughing … because he has tricked us into doing something that feels good or safe to our flesh, but keeps us AWAY from a vital relationship with the Lord!

How many of you would say “I feel so dry spiritually lately”? You know what? Chances are somewhere awhile back there was a struggle that was just too much, and you decided, ‘I can’t handle this, I’m putting it on the shelf’ and you just tried to avoid it. And something happened. Maybe you’ve forgotten it, but it’s become something stagnant and dry for you. Like a plug where you can feel neither joy nor pain. (Did you know when we shut out pain we also shut out joy? We can’t do one without the other!) Or maybe it’s a sin, or something God was asking of you; even something so tiny, that GOD put his finger on, but you refused to deal with it or do it. It can be anything, any form of resistance to Him that will make things dry. I’m not saying that this is without exception; I know there are times when we do all we know to do and surrender to God and it’s still dark. But it doesn’t hurt to look at ourselves honestly and ask the Lord:

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts…” –Psalm 139:23

It’s like I told a friend a few months ago, “You can’t be more connected with God than you are with your own Heart.” God deals with us when we come in Truth – with what our Reality is, be it pretty, awful, ugly, whatever it may be. When we come just as we are, there is hope. When we come trying to be what we think we should be … God says, “Sorry, I can’t help you.” And I think He weeps.

Is this Joy?

I often think of how Jesus handled some of the hardest moments of His Life… The agony of Gethsemane. How did He find Joy and resolution? Did he put on a brave face? He was perfect – did He not cringe, or care, or feel? Let’s look at what Scripture says:

“And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed [greatly troubled], and to be very heavy [deeply distressed];

“And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

“And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

“And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.” –Mark 14:33-36

Let’s picture for a moment. Can you imagine what He was facing? I can’t! He obviously knew that this was His moment; Scripture says that He is the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, so… did He harden Himself, steel Himself, or act like it was no big deal? Put on a brave face? No… NO! He is our perfect example. Look at how He poured himself out, begging God to spare him, crying out.

“And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” –Luke 22:44

I believe that cry came from the depths of His heart. He was facing what was ahead of Him, inside of Him, bringing His innermost longing to the Father, and when He had, He then said “not what I will, but as thou wilt.” This was no easy battle! Even though Jesus knew all along that His answer would be and was “Yes,” He still was willing to wrestle. We can too, and must, if we want to find truest Joy…

The reality is – There is no true surrender until we have first wrestled, first brought the depths of our longing to Him in all honesty, just the way it is. Then, and Only then, can we surrender, truly surrender, with all our hearts… And find Joy in His Presence. Because when we surrender, then there is that communion, that Abiding, that awesomeness of His Presence… and Joy, deepest JOY!
There is so much on my heart! How do I put it into words? Only our union with Christ, that depth of Abiding, that Presence... brings Joy. Oh... that Presence. That being In the Father and Jesus in me and I in Him. I am weeping. I see such a beautiful picture, I sense God's heart, but how do I communicate it in human words? How do I tell you how rich, how full, how Deep is His love for us? How His Spirit and His Presence is what I live for? How swimming in the depths of the River of His Spirit brings cleansing? How can I describe it? How when you're there, there is nothing else you want, nothing that comes close to appealing to you... It's Real! It's more than real, it's here, and it's this union, this mesh of Christ and me, and this connection of this human with His Eternity. All my words feel so cheap and unworthy, even unclean trying to explain it, compared to something so deep and Precious, so clean and Light.

I hope somehow through reading this you will want it, want it more than anything else in the world... And be willing to do whatever it takes, surrender all - because this abiding brings Life, it is Life, it is the Deepest Joy there is possible here on this earth. Once you’ve tasted it, you are full, you have more than you could ever want and need... and yet never enough, always wanting again more of that Vitality, more of Him, more of that which is worth more than Life itself! Have I whetted your appetite for real Joy?

It’s all about Him. Nothing else matters. Everything else falls flat, all our own ideas, our own efforts and attempts... It’s all about Him, People! There is no Joy, no meaning in Life, outside of Him. Abiding in Him is the only way to find true Joy! But to find Him, we must... Surrender. And Be Real as He was.

- Ellie Loewen

I hope somehow through reading this you will want it, want it more than anything else in the world... And be willing to do whatever it takes, surrender all... There is no Joy, no meaning in Life, outside of Him.

Ellie writes:

Hi! I’m wife to my adventurous husband, Eddy, and a busy mama of 3, ages 5, 3, and 9 months! It’s a constant challenge to prioritize, put first things first, and to ABIDE and rest in God amidst the busyness of day to day demands. God was reminding me recently when I was troubled by my messy house, and not keeping up with things, that it was more important how my own temple (my heart) is! In the last 3 ¾ years, I have never lived in a house longer than 7 months. I have lived in many places, including El Salvador where I grew up, Belize when I got married, and then Canada and Bolivia. Right now we live in Manitoba, where winter seems to take up 2/3 of our year! Through all life’s changes and uncertainty, I am so grateful that HE never changes and never will!

ORD! along this earthly way,
Thou Thy pilgrim greetest;
To Thy thankful child each day,
Thou Thy love repeatest;
Thou dost bid me weep no more,
Thou dost teach this song to soar,
Thou dost all the sweetness pour
When my life is sweetest.

- Thomas H. Gill

Abiding in Christ is a life of exquisite and overflowing happiness. As Christ gets more complete possession of the soul, it enters in the joy of its Lord.”

- Andrew Murray
Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Psalm 30:5

As I have thought and prayed about this article, this portion of Psalm 30:5 has been in the back of my mind almost all the time. But as the deadline for this article drew closer, I prayed even more that God would lead me. I did not want to write something that sounded like a “pity me” story. I wanted to glorify God! Verses with the word joy came to my mind but Psalm 30:5 stuck in my mind. So I finally said: “God, I believe You want this to be my key verse. Thank you for leading me this far!”

I was at my second cousin’s funeral today. Lenora Loewen died at the age of 22 (she had cancer of some kind; I do not recall hearing the name); she was only 3 days younger than my oldest sister. As I sat through the service and listened to the preaching of the Word, the stories, the memories, and the testimonies, my conscience was pricked. Who was I to think that my life was unbearably hard? Who was I to believe I couldn’t have abundant joy? The family up on the stage to share their last words “with Lenora;” the obituary. I listened and choked back tears and was blessed! Never once did I hear a hint of anger or bitterness. Did it look like it was easy for them to share? No, it didn’t! The second youngest sister shared about Lenora taking time for her to talk . . . the brother next to her also mentioned how she took time to talk (about what mattered) with him . . .

And I thought spraining my right ankle was bad! How could I? How dare I allow an INJURY to rob me of my peace and joy? Those two siblings will no longer be able to have deep talks with their big sister. I still have everything!

After having attended the funeral of a young person, I feel out of place to share anything about Psalm 30:5. Who am I to testify about weeping? But, I DID go through a time when I wondered if my “night” would ever end. And I can say: “joy cometh in the morning.”

A week ago I was totally blank about what to write. I had written thoughts down and once even wrote what was long enough to be an article but my heart was not in it. Finally I put everything aside; almost forgot about it and just trusted and believed that God was going to lead me very clearly (before July 15th). I shared my struggle with a few friends from church, but even as I shared I was FULLY confident that God would make everything clear to me.

And He did! 😊 God laid Psalm 30:5 on my heart and reminded me that there are many preachers who preach even when they feel as though they have nothing left to give; God always gives to them what they need (maybe even only when they go up and preach), and He can and will do the same for me. So I put myself aside and trusted God.

On May 27 of this year I sprained my right ankle, my “good ankle” (I badly sprained my left ankle about 1 ½ years ago). My ankle cracked and popped loudly and I lowered myself slowly onto the cement walk in front of our house. Pain shot through my foot; I groaned an “ow” and held my foot and ankle. I was quite sure it was broken. I held back tears for a few minutes, but soon they came and I allowed them. Pain throbbed through my foot and soon the question: “Why?” exploded through my head. Anger welled up within me. I forced myself to stand up. My mom saw me and plead with me to not move; I refused to listen. I slammed the front passenger door on the pickup I had just finished vacuuming and walked around the front of the pickup to close the other two doors on the driver’s side. My
mom called to me to please sit down, someone else could close the doors and move the truck. I yelled back, choking back sobs, “I don’t care! I’ve walked on a broken foot before!” (I may have and likely did not only sprain my left ankle but also broke it, I may never know for sure.) I slammed the passenger back door and got into the driver’s seat; my foot throbbed and tears coarsed down my face, and the question: “Why?” wouldn’t leave me. I rested my forehead on the steering wheel and wished for an answer.

My crying finally stopped when I acknowledged God, and said, “God, I can’t see what good You can do out of this, but I believe Your hand is in it.” This marked the end of the first struggle. And even though I believed God had a plan in the weeks that followed, I allowed myself to slip into discouragement and allowed myself to believe that I would be so much happier if I hadn’t sprained my ankle. I figured it made sense that I didn’t have much joy . . . until I thought about what I had planned to entitle my next AGW article! GOD: The Source of JOY. I was convicted but I tried to push that truth aside.

But, as my dad has often said: “Truth always stands. No matter what happens. In the end it’s always the truth that endured.” The truth that God is the Source of joy, wouldn’t leave me. When I said, “Amen” to God’s truth, I didn’t immediately feel a huge surge of joy go through me, but rather a simple, sweet, quiet peace. Verses like: John 15:11 and John 16:24 took on new depth. It was a blessing to know (through the Word of God) that Jesus wants me to have joy. I do not need to try to obtain joy through fun things. The last part of John 16:24 says: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy might be full. John 15:11 says: These things have I said until you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. (emphasis added)

Think about it: What do you think full joy looks like?

Jesus told His disciples to ask so that they would receive. When I read this verse a few weeks ago, a question came to my mind: “Am I asking?”

Dear Sisters, are we asking Christ for the things we need? Are we asking for strength, for courage, for faith to go through our night of weeping? Or are we stumbling through it trying to figure things out on our own? If we will not ask, we will not receive.

Perhaps you’re embarrassed to ask because the situation looks like it shouldn’t be so hard. Perhaps you think it would be silly to pray about it because, after all, God knows everything. Amen He does!! But He wants you to tell Him all about it!

Picture Jesus being your best friend, the friend you tell everything to. Do your girlfriends ever think you’re dumb? Don’t your friends enjoy hearing you share (even if they were there)? Don’t YOU like it when your friends are open with you? Well, make Jesus your best friend. Did you know that Jesus called His disciples “friends”? In John 15:14,15 He says: Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. The day I allowed myself to really think about Jesus being not only my Father but also my FRIEND, I was excited! ☺

Imagine Jesus sitting with you, just the two of you, and looking you in the eyes and asking: “How are you doing?” Sisters, Jesus wants to know! Jesus knows you have needs, Jesus knows He can meet every one of them! Are you allowing Him to? Are you being honest with Him? Are you telling Jesus ALL your struggles and then also asking for wisdom and direction?

Sisters, be specific with Jesus! Does one of your siblings seem impossible to get along with? Tell Jesus about it and ask for whatever you think you need. Do you find yourself worrying about the future? Tell Jesus and ask him to help you to rest in Him. No matter what your situation might be, the truth is this simple: ask and ye shall receive, that your joy might be full.
Did you notice something else? You won’t have **full joy** unless you ask (and receive).

Jesus wants His children to have joy.

Perhaps you find yourself in the “night” (Psalm 30:5). Perhaps you ARE weeping, perhaps joy seems out of your reach. But, O dear Sister! do not despair, do not give up! Continue seeking the Lord in prayer. Keep asking Him to lead you. Lean upon Jesus Christ, your loving, tenderhearted Father and Friend. God knows you will go through times of weeping or mourning and in His Word you can find that He will also comfort you in those times.

If you find yourself to be one of those who is “in a night,” take courage! God is with you even there and will never forsake you. And doesn’t it give you just a tiny bit of joy just to know He will comfort you? It gives me joy. Or perhaps it’s better described as **HOPE**? You can have hope because you **KNOW** (even though you can’t **SEE**) that: . . . weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. (emphasis added)

I believe the morning is when the situation becomes clear to us or when we can say: “God was leading me! When I was in the hardest part of it I sometimes wondered where God was taking me, but now I see and I am so thankful!”

Press on, Sisters!

I do not know why God allowed me to sprain my right ankle, but I have full confidence in this: God has a reason, a purpose. And yes, God is the Source of joy.

May His name be praised! 💛

- Trishia Plett, age 20 -

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**Fruit Salad**

Submitted by

Trishia Plett

2 apples, finely chopped 🍏
1 orange, peeled and coarsely chopped 🍊
3 or 4 kiwi, peeled, cut in half, and sliced 🍌
4 bananas 🍌
½ honeydew 🍏
½ (or less) canteloupe 🍏
strawberries, cut in large slivers or slices 🍓

Mix together just before serving.

We like to put plain, sweetened or unsweetened homemade yogurt over but it’s also good alone.

I think a good rule in making fruit salad is this: The salad should look like a good salad after every addition of fruit. No fruit should ever appear dominant (unless you want it to).

Do you have a favorite fruit recipe to submit for the next issue?

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**“**We all know the value of joy. It alone is the proof that what we have really satisfies the heart. As long as duty, or self-interest, or other motives influence me, no one can know what the object of my pursuit or possession is really worth to me. But when it gives me joy, and they see me delight in it, they know that to me at least it is a treasure.”

- Andrew Murray -

**“**God desires us to live as close as we can to the life that Jesus Christ lived. That is the broad avenue to perfect happiness. Most of us know by experience that in proportion as we have followed Him, we have found happiness. And we know by still larger experience that as we turn away from Him the world gets dark, and life ceases to be worth living.”

- George Hodges -

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Trishia writes: I live at home with my family. I have 9 siblings. My oldest sibling is married and I am looking forward to becoming an aunt, Lord willing in October. 😊

My goal in life is to be more like Jesus Christ, to lay aside my desires for the best interest of others.
When you think of joyfulness, what usually comes to mind? I always think of a person’s face lit up from within, expressing praise and thankfulness to the Lord – an inner joy that comes from close communion with her Savior that just “shines through”. Wouldn’t it be wonderful to be known as a joyful person?!

First, what is joyfulness? You might say that it is great gladness or happiness, but I think that joyfulness means much more than this. Joyfulness is the enthusiastic result of fellowship with the Lord. Other meanings are: rejoicing or exulting, voicing delight, giving evidence of joy and cheerfulness, jubilance, and expressing pleasure. The opposites of joyfulness are: despondency, sadness, destitute of joy, and full of gloom.

Staying in tune with the Lord will bring joyfulness to your heart. J. H. Taylor once said, “Nothing humbles the soul like sacred and intimate communion with the Lord; yet there is a sweet joy in knowing that He knows all, and notwithstanding loves us still.”

How do you stay in tune with Jesus? By reading His Word, spending time in prayer, giving each day to the Lord and putting Him first in your life. Now, please don’t think that I am perfect in this area, as I’m not ☹! I strive to do my best, but still have struggles and failures.

However, I have found that four things are essential to keeping in tune with my Saviour. I, personally, must read the Bible, pray, commit each day to the Lord, and put Him first in order to keep in tune with Jesus. You can’t possibly keep in tune with the Lord if you’re not reading His Word, talking with Him, committing your days to Him, and putting Him first!

I would suggest that you first spend time in prayer before you read your Bible in the morning. Make sure you praise and worship the Lord, and express thankfulness for the blessings that He has given you. Doing this first will make your quiet time with Jesus each morning sweeter, and your spiritual life will be more refreshing and “alive”!! You will walk away from your devotions with joy and will be prepared to face the day! I decided to start doing this, and I’ve found that my devotions every day go so much better!

Joy comes from focusing on Jesus, praising and thanking Him for His mercy, love, forgiveness, grace, wisdom, righteousness, truth, and majestic power.

Many of the Psalms praise and exult God. Psalms 108:1-5 says, “O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.... Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O LORD.... For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth.”

Psalms 103 shows us that we should bless the Lord and not forget the blessings He has given us; see verses 1-5, 8, 11-12, and 17.

To retain joyfulness, we must strive to keep a focus on Jesus and the “things above” (see Colossians 3:2), faithfully pray and read the Bible each day, give every day to the Lord that He may have His will and way, be a servant (to God and others), be content, and express praise and thankfulness to Christ.

Being a servant is very important and will make you full of joy! “By lifting the burdens of others we lose our own” is a saying I found once. It is true! On the days that I give myself to God and others, I have joy that comes from being unselfish and focusing on others. Joyfulness will come from putting Jesus first, then others, and yourself last (notice that the first letter of Jesus, others, and you spells out joy).
The apostle Paul’s life was a living example of joyfulness; in every situation he found joy and contentment, because his life was rooted and grounded in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Acts 20 Paul talked with the Ephesian “elders of the church” and told them how he was serving the Lord and about the afflictions that were continually in his path.

However, the afflictions Paul suffered did not keep him from serving the Lord; “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy....” (vs. 24)

When writing to the saints and faithful brethren in Colosse, Paul remarked, “For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” (Colossians 2:5-7).

And in 1 Thessalonians 5:16 and 18, Paul exhorts the brethren to “Rejoice evermore.... In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

Remember Nehemiah 8:10, which declares that “the joy of the LORD is your strength.” Our wise, loving Saviour never lets us endure something that we cannot face (see 1 Corinthians 10:13 and 2 Corinthians 12:9). We should “count it all joy” (James 1:2-3) when we have trials, and rejoice that the Lord finds us worthy to endure hardships for Him.

Through salvation itself, we can find joy; Psalm 51:12 says, “the joy of thy salvation!” As born-again believers, we are washed in our dear Saviour’s blood.

Psalm 35:9 says, “And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.”

“O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation” declares Psalm 95:1.

Psalm 66:1-2, 8-9 says, “Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands: Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious. O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard: Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.”

Joyfulness will come just from being a child of God and praising Him for the wonderful salvation He has so mercifully granted to us! Another verse that comes to mind is Isaiah 12:2, “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and be not afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.”

What wonderful joy has sprung up in my heart because Jesus Christ has saved me and has made me one of His own! Do you have that joy in your heart? Has Jesus washed you in His precious blood and made you one of His own?

Colossians 1:10-14 is a wonderful passage of Scripture and just reading it brings joy to my heart; “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins....” Joyfulness will come from being a born-again child of God!

There are certain hindrances that will block joyfulness in your life; they are commonly found in the nature of us all. A few of these hindrances are discontentment, self-pity, selfishness, ungratefulness, and a pessimistic attitude.

Self-pity especially will prevent you from having joy, and you will lead a miserable life! If you are thinking, “Oh, I have to work like a slave, and I never get to do anything fun! God just isn’t blessing me; nobody loves me or understands me!”, you will never know what joy is! Joy comes from the heart that is thankful, content, and praising the Lord. “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4)

Where can we go to obtain joyfulness? To God’s precious Word, the Holy Bible. You will find joy
in the Word! Jeremiah 15:16 says, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart....”

Psalm 63:3-5 and 7 is a favorite passage of Scripture that brings joy to me: “Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.”

We should learn to be joyful in all circumstances, and not let one little “drop” of bitterness, self-pity, or anger taint our lives. Psalm 16:11 says, “in thy presence is fullness of joy”; if you’re in the Lord’s presence, you will find “fullness of joy”. As we abide in Him and He in us (see John 15), His joy will show and He will be glorified!

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“My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.” Psalm 104:34

“If you have a murmuring spirit, you cannot have true cheerfulness; it will generally show in your countenance and your voice. Some little fretfulness or restlessness of tone will betray it. Your cheerfulness is forced, it does not spring up freely and healthily out of your heart, which it can only do when that is truly at rest in God; when you are satisfied with His ways, and wishing no change in them. When this is truly your case, then your heart and mind are free, and you can rejoice in spirit.” ~ Priscilla Maurice ~

“My Joy ... Your Joy
by Oswald Chambers

“That My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” John 15:11

What was the joy that Jesus had? It is an insult to use the word happiness in connection with Jesus Christ. The joy of Jesus was the absolute self-surrender and self-sacrifice of Himself to His Father, the joy of doing that which the Father sent Him to do. “I delight to do Thy will.” Jesus prayed that our joy might go on fulfilling itself until it was the same joy as His. Have I allowed Jesus Christ to introduce His joy to me?

The full flood of my life is not in bodily health, not in external happenings, not in seeing God’s work succeed, but in the perfect understanding of God and in the communion with Him that Jesus Himself had. The first thing that will hinder this joy is the captious irritation of thinking out circumstances. The cares of this world, said Jesus, will choke God’s word. Before we know where we are, we are caught up in the shows of things. All that God has done for us is the mere threshold; He wants to get us to the place where we will be His witnesses and proclaim Who Jesus is.

Be rightly related to God, find your joy there, and out of you will flow rivers of living water. Be a centre for Jesus Christ to pour living water through. Stop being self-conscious, stop being a sanctified prig, and live the life hid with Christ. The life that is rightly related to God is as natural as breathing wherever it goes. The lives that have been of most blessing to you are those who were unconscious of it.

August 31“
It was a warm summer morning. Twelve-year-old Tina was humming softly as she made her bed. It was such a lovely day!

Tina skipped downstairs. “Good morning!” Mother smiled.

“Good morning!” Tina returned cheerfully. “What shall I do?”

“Please set the table,” Mother instructed. “Then you may fry eggs for breakfast.”

Tina quickly set the table. She loved to cook, and since she was the oldest girl, she often got to.

Crack, Tina cracked the eggs one by one, humming all the while. Soon the eggs were fried, and it was breakfast time.

But when Tina first tasted the eggs, she knew she had made a mistake. And she knew what it was. She had forgotten the salt!

Tina’s little brother soon noticed that the eggs didn’t taste as good as usual, and he began to complain.

“No more complaining, children,” Father said firmly. “The eggs are still good to eat.”

After breakfast, Tina began to clear the table, but she was frowning now, not humming.

Clatter, clatter, said the dishes, as Tina stacked them up.

“Cheer up!” Mother encouraged. “We all make mistakes. Would you like to help mix up a cake?”

“No really,” Tina mumbled. “I don’t feel like cooking anymore.”

“Tina, come here a minute,” Grandpa called from the study. Ever since Grandma had died, Grandpa had lived with them.

Tina went to the study and pushed open the door. Grandpa looked up from his desk.

“Tina, what happened to your joy?”

“My – what?” Tina asked blankly.

“Your joy.”

Tina dropped her eyes and blushed, but did not answer.

Grandpa reached for his Bible, and found Philippians 4. Pointing to verse 4, he said, “Read this verse, Tina.”

Tina read, “Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice.”

“Rejoice in the Lord alway,” Grandpa repeated. “Now go help your mother.”

As Tina left the study, she felt cheerful again.

“Dear Lord,” she prayed. “I really do want to rejoice alway, even when things go wrong. Please help me to be joyful in You.”

Hannah Lang, 12, enjoys reading, writing letters and stories, learning to cook, singing, and more. She would love to hear from you at:

1199 County Road DK
Brussels, WI 54204

“That is what our sacrifice of ourselves should be—full of life. Not desponding, morbid, morose; not gloomy, chilly, forbidding; not languid, indolent, inactive; but full of life, and warmth, and energy; cheerful, and making others cheerful; gay, and making others gay; happy, and making others happy; contented, and making others contented; doing good, and making others do good, by our lively vivid vitality—filling every corner of our own souls and bodies, filling every corner of the circle in which we move, with the fresh life-blood of a warm, genial, kindly Christian heart. Doubtless this requires a sacrifice; it requires us to give up our own comfort, our own ease, our own firesides, our dear solitude, our own favorite absorbing pursuits, our shyness, our reserve, our pride, our selfishness.”

~ Arthur P. Stanley ~
“Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.” I Chronicles 16:10

“Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The LORD reigneth. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.” I Chronicles 16:31-32

“And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.” I Samuel 2:1

“Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10

“I will also clothe his priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.” Psalm 132:16

“Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.” Job 5:17

“But the Lord shall fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.” Job 8:21

“The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.” Job 29:13

“Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.” Psalm 2:11

“You have turned for me my mourning into dancing: you have put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.” Psalm 30:11

“Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.” Job 8:21

“Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.” Psalm 4:7

“But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.” Psalm 5:11

“I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.” Psalm 9:2

“That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.” Psalm 9:14

“But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.” Psalm 13:5

“Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.” Psalm 16:9

“You will show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Psalm 16:11

“The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.” Psalm 19:8

“The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!” Psalm 21:1

“For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.” Psalm 21:6

“And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.” Psalm 27:6

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.” Psalm 28:7

“For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” Psalm 30:5

“You have turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.” Psalm 30:11

“I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities.” Psalm 31:7

“Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.” Psalm 32:11
“Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.” Psalm 33:1

“For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.” Psalm 33:21

“My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.” Psalm 34:2

“And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.” Psalm 35:9

“Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.” Psalm 35:27

“Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.” Psalm 35:27

“Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.” Psalm 43:4

“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” Psalm 45:7

“Make me to hear joy and gladness: that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.” Psalm 45:15

“With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king’s palace.” Psalm 45:15

“Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.” Psalm 96:11

“O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.” Psalm 67:4

“But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.” Psalm 68:3-4

“The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.” Psalm 69:32

“Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.” Psalm 70:4

“My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.” Psalm 71:23

“Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.” Psalm 81:1

“Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?” Psalm 85:6

“Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.” Psalm 86:4

“Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.” Psalm 89:15-16

“O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.” Psalm 90:14

“O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise unto the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.” Psalm 95:1-2

“Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.” Psalm 96:11-13

“The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.” Psalm 97:1

“Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD.” Psalm 97:8
“Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.” Psalm 97:11-12

“O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.” Psalm 98

“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.” Psalm 100:1-2

“My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.” Psalm 104:34

“Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.” Psalm 105:3

“And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness:” Psalm 105:43

“And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.” Psalm 107:22

“He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord.” Psalm 113:9

“The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.” Psalm 118:15

“This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” Psalm 118:24

“I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.” Psalm 119:14

“They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.” Psalm 119:74

“Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.” Psalm 119:111

“I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.” Psalm 119:162

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.” Psalm 122:1

“The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.” Psalm 126:2-3

“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” Psalm 126:5-6

“Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.” Psalm 127:5

“Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.” Psalm 132:9

“Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.” Psalm 144:15

“Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.” Psalm 146:5

“Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.” Psalm 149:2

“Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.” Psalm 149:5

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.” Proverbs 3:13

“She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.” Proverbs 3:18

“The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.” Proverbs 10:1

“The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.” Proverbs 10:28

“Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.” Proverbs 12:20

“Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.” Proverbs 12:25
“The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.” Proverbs 13:9

“He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.” Proverbs 14:21

“A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.” Proverbs 15:20

“A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!” Proverbs 15:23

“The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.” Proverbs 15:30

“He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he.” Proverbs 16:20

“He that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.” Proverbs 17:21

“It is joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.” Proverbs 21:15

“My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.” Proverbs 23:15

“The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.” Proverbs 23:24-25

“Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man’s friend by hearty counsel.” Proverbs 27:9

“My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.” Proverbs 27:11

“Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.” Proverbs 28:14

“Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance.” Proverbs 29:3

“In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.” Proverbs 29:6

“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.” Proverbs 29:18

“Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.” Proverbs 31:25

“For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.” Ecclesiastes 2:26

“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” Isaiah 12:3

“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” Isaiah 25:9

“The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” Isaiah 29:19

“And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Isaiah 35:10

“Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.” Isaiah 49:13

“For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” Isaiah 55:12

“Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.” Isaiah 56:7

“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.” Isaiah 61:3

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” Isaiah 61:10

“For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.” Isaiah 62:5
“Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.” Isaiah 65:14

“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LOR D God of hosts.” Jeremiah 15:16

“Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.” Jeremiah 31:13

“Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.” Jeremiah 32:41

“The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD.” Jeremiah 33:11

“The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.” Joel 1:12

“Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.” Joel 2:21

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.” Habakkuk 3:17-19

“The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.” Zephaniah 3:17

“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” Matthew 5:12

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.” Matthew 13:44

“And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.” Matthew 28:8

“And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.” Luke 1:14

“And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.” Luke 1:47

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” Luke 2:10

“Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.” Luke 6:23

“Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” Luke 10:20-21

“And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;” Luke 19:37

“He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.” John 3:29

“And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.” John 4:36

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” John 13:17

“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” John 15:11

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall...” John 15:11

“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” Matthew 5:12
be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” John 16:20-22

“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” John 16:24

“And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” John 17:13

“Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope.” Acts 2:26

“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,” Acts 2:46

“And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.” Acts 5:41

“And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.” Acts 8:39

“And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.” Acts 13:52

“Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.” Acts 14:17

“And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.” Acts 15:3

“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:24

“By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Romans 5:2

“And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” Romans 5:11

“Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;” Romans 12:12

“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” Romans 12:15

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” Romans 14:17

“That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.” Romans 15:13

“And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;” I Corinthians 7:30

“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” I Corinthians 12:26

“Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;” I Corinthians 13:6

“For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.” II Corinthians 1:12

“Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.” II Corinthians 1:24

“And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.” II Corinthians 2:3

“As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” II Corinthians 6:10

“Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.” II Corinthians 7:4
“Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.” II Corinthians 7:9

“Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.” II Corinthians 7:13

“How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” II Corinthians 8:2

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,” Galatians 5:22

“But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.” Galatians 6:4

“Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,” Philippians 1:4

“What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” Philippians 1:18

“Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.” Philippians 2:2

“Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.” Philippians 2:16

“For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.” Philippians 2:18

“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.” Philippians 3:1

“Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.” Philippians 4:4

“Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness,” Colossians 1:11

“And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.” I Thessalonians 1:6

“For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;” I Thessalonians 3:9

“Rejoice evermore.” I Thessalonians 5:16

“Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy,” II Timothy 1:4

“For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.” Philemon 1:7

“Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.” Philemon 1:20

“But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Hebrews 3:6

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” Hebrews 13:17

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;” James 1:2

“Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted.” James 1:9

“But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.” James 4:16

“Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” James 5:11

“Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;” I Peter 1:6-8

“But and if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;” I Peter 3:14
“But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.” I Peter 4:13-14

“And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.” I John 1:4

“I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.” II John 1:4

“My joy is in the Holy Ghost—Unspeakable and full of glory.

The fruit of the Spirit is . . . joy.

Joy in the Holy Ghost—Unspeakable and full of glory.

‘Sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; . . . exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation—We glory in tribulations.’

Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; . . . for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame—These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full—As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abundeth by Christ.

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice—The joy of the Lord is your strength.

‘In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore—For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.’

GAL. 5:22; ROM. 14:17—I PET. 1:8; II COR. 6:10; 7:4—ROM. 5:3; Heb. 12:2—JOHN 15:11—II COR. 1:5; PHIL. 4:4; NEH. 8:10; Ps. 16:11—REV. 7:17

Taken from Daily Light on the Daily Path, April 1, Morning.

“Let us seek the grace of a cheerful heart, an even temper, sweetness, gentleness, and brightness of mind, as walking in His light, and by His grace. Let us pray to Him to give us the spirit of ever-abundant, ever-springing love, which overpowers and sweeps away the vexations of life by its own richness and strength, and which, above all things, unites us to Him who is the fountain and the centre of all mercy, loving-kindness, and joy.”

~ John Henry Newman ~

“Joy is not the absence of struggle, but the finding of God in it!” ~ E. Joy Loewen ~

Rejoice in Christ always!

When earth looks heavenly bright,
When joy makes glad the livelong day,
And peace shuts in the night.
Rejoice, when care and woe
The fainting soul oppress,
When tears at wakeful midnight flow,
And morn brings heaviness.

Rejoice in hope and fear;
Rejoice in life and death;
Rejoice when threatening storms are near,
And comfort languisheth:
When should not they rejoice
Whom Christ His brethren calls,—
Who hear and know His guiding voice
When on their hearts it falls?

~ John Moultrie ~

For contact information, please see inside cover. For subscription rates, please see back cover (page 32).
How important do you think joy is? How much does it mean to you? Is it optional? - It's no little thing; it's a commandment; it's a fruit of the Spirit. It is of utmost importance to get joy. It is foundational. In each of us is the yearning to be full of joy . . .

What does the Bible say about joy? - In His presence is fulness of joy (Ps. 16:11) . . . making request with joy (Phil. 1:4) . . . that your joy may be full (I John 1:4) . . . the joy of the Lord is your strength . . . restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation (Ps. 51:12) . . . that My joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full (John 15:11) . . . ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory (I Pet. 1:8) . . . count it all joy when ye fall into temptations (James 1:2) . . .

It is only as we come to the place of being in God’s presence even through trials that we know true joy. (Ps. 16:11) . . . has it reached my heart? I must really understand and agree with God for that joy to reach my heart.

What is the Source? What is the core? How do you get to the place where you have the real thing? - Walking in the Spirit, not the flesh . . . Jesus, Others, You . . . be poured out for others . . . It is really so simple, but we are so full of ourselves – because of that, we cannot see what God has freely given us and we cannot have that joy overflowing in us – for we are not fulfilling our purpose, to glorify God, to have fellowship with Him, to be one with Him . . . I must die to self and find that God is everything and nothing else matters. Everything else will fall into place if my one desire is to live out the purpose of glorifying God and fellowshipping with Him. - I need not live all caught up in myself. - All my other problems will melt away in His presence. As I begin to understand God’s will for my life, He puts everything in order. Every vice will slip away in the presence of God, when I know my calling, when I am fulfilling my purpose. - If I can get a hold of these things, my life will be utterly transformed.

A key can be used to mark books, open lids, etc, but its purpose is to unlock a car door and let you in, to go into the ignition and let the car run, and to let you go where you need to go. Our lives have a purpose, but many of us are wasting our lives doing something that is not our purpose. We live our lives full of ourselves and we live in the sorrow of our selfishness. We need to get right with God . . . we will be changed. - This is for now, for today, to transform our lives . . . We simply need to understand, “I have a purpose, and that purpose is to be one with God. It doesn’t matter what comes my way, I am working toward His plans and purposes.” We must understand that God can take every circumstance and make it profitable to His praise and glory in our lives, that He is in sovereign control of everything and will work out everything for good. We must believe that He is and that He will reward if we diligently seek Him. He will make our lives meaningful. If we don’t believe, we cannot have joy.

How do we bring this to reality? - Counterfeits are all around . . . Christians hurting inside, falling apart, but pasting on a nice smile and saying, “I’m fine!” How do you avoid the plastic? - We are so full of ourselves, we make excuses for everything. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God – we cannot make a wrong right in our own strength. We walk in the foolishness of our own flesh when all we need is to humble ourselves before God. We need to acknowledge that we are not walking in our purpose to be like Him. “Change me, make me able to do Thy will . . .” I must release myself in the presence of God and say, “Here I am again, a dreadful mess . . . cleanse me, stamp Your likeness upon me,” etc. and my heart will answer. - Not my will, but Thine, be done. - It will fix every problem I’ll face. - This is foundational . . . this transforms lives . . . “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” We try it on our own and it doesn’t work, only frustrates us.
He means to make you see your own selfishness so you can turn from it . . . and be made like unto Him. All my humanity must be nailed to the cross. God does not want me to continue in my own selfish ways; that is why He sometimes brings adverse circumstances to my life. It is when I understand this and allow myself to be nailed to the cross that His fulness is in me and I experience joy.

There is no circumstance you could ever face that can bar joy from its presence. - Trials are much harder on us than they need to be when we don’t realize that they are for our good, and when we don’t see the hand of God, and don’t trust Him fully. We must be willing, that it may draw us closer to Him. Nothing will offend us when we are nailed to the cross and know we are pleasing to Him – that if life ended right now, He would say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: enter into the joy of thy Lord.” - Everything that is robbing your joy – will you take it to the cross?? Those utterly unexplainable, exasperating, frustrating circumstances? Will you utterly trust Him and surrender all? Nothing else matters – “I am Yours, and Yours alone” – and a fountain of life springs forth. - If you want it, your heritage is to experience fulness of joy in His presence forever and constantly.

Without it? Fear, misery, anxiety, nothing to give to others, a testimony that means nothing . . . What about getting down to reality? Well, is there anything more real than all this?? It is the unreal world around us that doesn’t see how real this truly is.

“But I can’t . . .” Exactly . . . but where you can’t, God can. God does not ask us to do the impossible. When you say, “I can’t,” you are believing the devil’s lies and agreeing with him. God said you can through Christ, and we need to agree with Him. This will all utterly transform our life!

You ought not to be making excuses for your failures! Face them and fulfill your purpose, and live in fulness of joy.

-This will be your reward if you diligently seek Him.-

Comments from others after the message:

“Pursue joy, and it will elude you.
Pursue God, and joy will overtake you.”

“Do you want joy? Serve others. That’s God’s design – when we serve others, we get JOY. When we serve ourselves, we are robbed of joy.

*God must be the source of our joy. Even if everything in life goes wrong, we can have joy (Hab. 3:17-18). No one, nothing should take away our joy (John 16:22).

“The devil tries to rob us of our joy because he knows it is the Christian's strength.

*Joy costs nothing, yet everything. It comes with a price.

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORd, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORd God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.” - Habakkuk 3:17-19

On our way rejoicing gladly let us go; Conquered hath our Leader, vanquished is our foe! Christ without, our safety! Christ within, our joy! Who, if we be faithful, can our hope destroy? On our way rejoicing as we homeward move, Hearken to our praises, O Thou God of love!

- J.B.S. Monsell -

Give me, O Lord, a heart of grace,
A voice of joy, a shining face,
That I may show where’er I turn
Thy love within my soul doth burn!

A tenderness for all that stray,
With strength to help them on the way
A cheerfulness, a heavenly mirth,
Brightening my steps along the earth!

- Lady Gilbert -
When I was praying about what to write about joy, I heard the Lord say "The joy of the Lord is your strength." The verse was familiar to me, but I didn't know much about it. I've told myself "the joy of the Lord is my strength" when I'm struggling, I've prayed it out loud as a promise, and I've puzzled over it ("what is God's joy?"), but I never took the time to investigate the chapters that it's found in. I was surprised to find it near the end of Nehemiah (8:10) and shocked that over forty thousand people were weeping when it was spoken to them (Neh 7:66, 8:9).

I sat in the back booth of a Thai restaurant recently and read the exciting story of Nehemiah that holds this verse. God writes all the good stories and this one’s setting is dark and dramatic. (There were times when I was reading it that I literally gasped and said "Oh no!" out loud. Thankfully it was pretty empty in the restaurant!)

God’s people had finally been granted permission to come out of Persian exile and back into their own land. When they arrived in Jerusalem, the city was in utter disrepair. Jerusalem’s broken down walls and burned gates made the Jews deeply ashamed and easy prey for their neighboring enemies.

Nehemiah secured the supplies they needed from the king (a miracle of God’s favor!) and rallied the Jewish people to rebuild. Despite persistent and fierce satanic opposition (Neh 2:10, 19-20, Neh 4, Neh 6:1-14), God’s people set out to do what He commanded them to do. They persistently rebuilt the walls and gates with a hammer in one hand and a sword in the other. When the walls were finally complete, the people celebrated and their enemies shuddered in fear.

The first thing they did to celebrate and consecrate this victory was to have God’s holy scriptures read publicly to every man, woman, and child who was old enough to understand. After many years of being slaves in a pagan land, Ezra the priest held an open-air church service for forty-two thousand people. The response when they heard the Word of God was overwhelming.

And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was standing above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. [...] So they read in the book the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

And Nehemiah, [who was the governor], and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, “This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep.” For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, “Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: [do not be grieved,] for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, “Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved.” And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: [do not be grieved,] for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:5-6, 8-12

When Ezra started reading the Word, the people were pierced to the heart over their sins.
They wept and grieved so hard over sin that scripture says they had to be calmed down. It's out of this context – of brokenness over sin and a humbled spirit – that they were told to find strength in God’s joy.

Does this fit our concept of joy? It fits God’s description of it, though it may seem strange to us.

- In Galatians 5:22, we find out that joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Anything that brings us to a place of dependence on the Spirit (suffering, conviction over sin, enduring fierce satanic battles), allows His holy joy to flow into us and through us. It’s the joy of being right with the Lord in our spirit.

- John 15:1-11 gives us the secret of entering into and remaining in that joy. How? In this passage, Jesus gives us clear, firm instructions about abiding in Him and obeying His commands out of that abiding.

Merriam-Webster’s defines abiding as: “to endure without yielding (withstand), to accept without objection and conform to (submit), to remain stable or fixed in a state (remain), to continue in a place (wait).”

Abiding is living our lives connected to the “true vine,” Jesus Christ Himself (John 15:1). It’s seeking to intentionally dwell in His presence all day long; living life before His face. As we are consciously in His presence, every thought and action is then submitted to Him as an act of obedient worship.

If we give ourselves to learning the discipline of abiding in Christ, He gives us a strong word of encouragement and promise:

"These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." John 15:11

The beauty of this joy is that it’s absolutely unshakable despite circumstances. It’s the joy of being the friend of God, of being intimate with Him. Rather than suffering marring this joy, it’s the tool He uses to help us initially enter into this joy and continue to go deeper still.

Nothing has made me want to abide in Christ more than suffering. I’m naturally distracted in pleasure, but He has my full attention in pain. I haven’t obtained the goal of perfectly abiding in Christ’s joy (and I never will on this earth), but I can testify to how He’s grown me in it.

I thought I knew pure joy when I stood at the altar with my husband in 2006 and we exchanged our vows. We had waited so long for each other and everything about our relationship was God-ordained. Our wedding was a moment of great victory and holy joy, but it was just the doorway. The past seven years since that day I’ve been in God’s school to learn a deeper kind of joy.

Just months after our wedding, I became suddenly ill with double pneumonia that would not respond to most antibiotics. I was a healthy and active twenty-five year old, but now I gasped for air and spent sleepless nights crying out to the Lord to heal me. I was so weak that my new husband had to help me to the restroom, cook for me, and bathe me. I no longer thought I was invincible and I found out what it meant to spend time in God’s presence 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I was pressed into His presence through suffering and He was my only relief.

After much prayer and some time in the hospital, I did start to heal. We both praised God for sparing my life and knew that our marriage had been aged about ten years through it. My personal walk with the Lord was never the same.

With that crisis past, I entered into a deeper, internal crisis as a woman. I longed for children and spent the next three years crying out to the Lord for Him to enable us to conceive. Every month my heart broke when it didn’t happen and I later learned I had medical conditions that would make it difficult. My heart ached for children so intensely, it felt like it would break into pieces. I brought it before the Lord often and kept asking Him to clean out the layers of anger and idolatry He was revealing in me through the delay. I felt an emptiness and sadness I couldn’t push away and so I pressed into His side.

I began seeking Him more intentionally and listening for His voice all day long. I consciously began inviting Him into my pain. The ache wasn’t completely erased (it was a God-given desire), but it didn’t consume me anymore and I
didn’t feel alone in it as I abided in Him. As I sought Him, I found a holy joy in His presence that surpassed the suffering.

In the middle of that infertility struggle, my husband was diagnosed with an incurable autoimmune disorder. It primarily affected his colon and soon became a steady frustration and discomfort for him. A year and a half into the disease, it progressed despite all treatment and became both intensely painful and debilitating. He couldn’t work and could barely eat. We would hold each other, sing hymns, and weep in his pain. We prayed more intensely and sought the Lord more fervently than ever. God mercifully brought us a surgeon to remove his colon and we both had hope of a complete healing.

Two weeks after surgery, I brought him back to the hospital for a minor complication and he was admitted back into his old room. He looked at me and said: "I don’t feel right, Joy" and laid back in the bed, unresponsive and unconscious. He had gone into sudden cardiac arrest. I walked out of the room as they began to try to revive him, utterly stunned. I sat in lobby area and began asking God to spare his life. A few minutes into that prayer, I felt the Holy Spirit leading me to give him back and surrender his life. I started praying: "Thank You for our time together. He is yours, Lord. I give him back to You now." A holy joy that I couldn’t explain absolutely overwhelmed me in that moment. I was still incredibly grief-stricken when the nurses and doctors came to me and confirmed what I already knew, but the supernatural joy was pervasive.

The grief journey that I experienced after his homecoming was raw, real, and intense – yet the joy never left me. I have never pressured so hard into Jesus’ side in my life. God’s Word and presence was a matter of survival in that kind of pain. I began to eat God’s Word for "breakfast, lunch, and dinner" because it was the only thing that filled my heart and held me steady. My intimacy with the Lord once again was deepened through suffering and I was left with that lasting treasure when the intensity subsided.

It’s been seven years since I stood at that altar and said “I do” to all that the Lord had in mind for me. At the present time, I am surrendered to His call to serve in missions in Uganda and I am preparing for it daily in faith. It’s been a humbling season of letting go of a nice-sounding title and a secure salary to train for a position and a ministry I don’t see or know yet. I’ve wrestled with the “how are You going to do this, God?” question repeatedly but He just confirms that I’m on track, on schedule, and He’s not worried. My three short-term trips there have increased my desire and I’ve felt increasingly rootless as I wait for Him to plant me there. Again, the pressure of circumstances has pressed me deeper into abiding in Him.

As painful as our earthly trials are (and I know you could share your own!), I wouldn’t trade the intimacy with Christ that I’ve gained through them for anything. I hear His voice clearly speaking to me throughout the day, and I get a sense of when His heart is happy or sad and join Him in that. I feel His arms around me at night and I hold His hand in church or when I walk. I do still feel lonely at times, but never ever alone. He’s lonely with me, He weeps with me. We fight battles together, we have fun together, and just "do life" together.

He fills me with holy joy in His presence and the joy of the Lord is my strength.

"Thou wilt [make known to] me the path of life: In Thy presence is fulness of joy; At Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalms 16:11

Joy writes: I’m 32 years old and my background is primarily in medical work (as a Paramedic and an RN) and in lay women's ministry. I was called by the Lord into missions to Uganda in June of 2011 while I was on my first short term trip there. I’m now on the journey of intentionally training for the open door God will reveal to me when the time is right (Revelation 3:8).
Rejoicing in Hope
A Daily Light Devotional

Rejoicing in hope.

The hope which is laid up for you in heaven—If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Whosoever doth not take his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. No man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ROM. 12:12; COL. 1:5—1 COR. 15:19—ACTS 14:22—LUKE 14:27—I THESS. 3:3; PHIL. 4:4—ROM. 15:13—I PET. 1:3—I PET. 1:8—ROM. 5:2.

From Daily Light on the Daily Path, September 7, Morning.

"We may sing beforehand, even in our winter storm, in the expectation of a summer sun at the turn of the year; no created powers can mar our Lord Jesus' music, nor spill our song of joy. Let us then be glad and rejoice in the salvation of our Lord; for faith had never yet cause to have wet cheeks, and hanging-down brows, or to droop or die."

- Samuel Rutherford -
Greetings to the Daughters of our King, Jesus Christ,

This letter, I hope and pray, will be an encouragement to you. Without a doubt, I perceive from the many letters I receive from you, that the pain of loneliness, of being different, and of being the only one amongst your peers to have a separated walk troubles many of your hearts most acutely. The last issue of The King's Daughter addressed the issue of standing alone in an excellent manner. Very clear examples were given by girls striving to do what is right, which their parents have taught them through God's Word. I would just like to add a few thoughts of encouragement to those already expressed, in the hopes of easing some of the pain that many of you express.

Mara Nail put it so well when she spoke of her struggle to “fit in” with her peers. She questions, “Do we strive to fit in, or do we strive to follow Christ?” That is a good question. Some girls have a very difficult time deciding whom to follow. It should be an easy, clear-cut choice, but for many it is not. The difficulty occurs, perhaps, because we do not really know our God. We are confused. Confusion brings uncertainty and double-mindedness. There is no strength of a solid base beneath our convictions. We are easily swayed because we are not sure in whom we are standing. All this confusion tends to cause us to focus on ourselves, and we might even feel a little self-pity on how difficult our struggle seems to be.

God planned for man to have an abundant life here on earth. He wants His children to live joyful lives. In fact, He gives us His joy. God loves us so much that He made a way for us to have our sins forgiven, and to live victoriously here on earth before we go to spend eternity in His heavenly kingdom. Jesus came willingly to die for us that we might have life.

In Hebrews chapter 2, we read, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren...” - Hebrews 2:9-11.

And in verse 17: “Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” Jesus is not ashamed to call us His brethren! Can you imagine that? He, God, our High Priest, is not ashamed to call us His sisters! Jesus has done so much for us. He is our Savior, the Captain of our salvation. He became one of us, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest. He suffered shame and degradation for us. He tasted death for us. He loves us so. When we can get a glimpse of who He is, and really love Him with hearts full of gratitude for all He has done, the choice of whom to follow is not quite so difficult. The road is not so hard and lonely. The martyrs counted it a joy to die for Him. They served a living and risen Savior.

Dear girls, do not focus on your being different! You are different because you are a daughter of the King! Focus on the King, and it will be a joy to be different! Do not fret because your family may be different. Rejoice because they serve a Heavenly King

Gratitude and grumbling cannot abide in the same heart.
instead of an earthly kingdom. The temptations of the sins of the world should be tossed away without a thought. “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” – 2 Cor 4:17-18. We need not be tempted to complain how hard we have it, when we can look at the life and example of our Savior. May God forgive us when we would complain about our suffering, when ours is nothing compared to our Lord’s. How do you think our King would feel about grumbling, self-pitying servants – the same servants He rescued from death? Gratitude and grumbling cannot abide in the same heart.

Look for the joy in dressing differently. Delight in walking chastely and purely. Trust and obey your parents. Look not to fit in with those who only dabble with following God, but look to fit into God’s kingdom. Do not feel that you are on the outside looking in at the world’s fun, but know that you are on the inside in God’s kingdom, and pray for those who may not have learned to truly follow Him. Let them see Him in you.

When others poke fun or ask those embarrassing questions as to why you are so different, smile, radiate Christ’s love, and answer wisely. Do not be ashamed of Jesus or of living your life for Him. Rather, glory in the Lord. Delight in Him. All you do should be a reflection of your service and devotion to the King of Kings. He will one day say, “Well done, my daughter.”

Jesus, and Others, and You–
What a wonderful way to spell JOY!
Jesus, and Others, and You,
In the life of each girl and each boy.
J is for Jesus, for He has first place,
O is for Others we meet face to face,
Y is for You, in whatever you do,
Put yourself third and spell JOY!

“Each soul has its own faculty; it can help in some way to make the world more cheerful and more beautiful. This it is which makes life worth living. If we are living only for ourselves, our own amusement, luxury, advancement, life is not worth living. But if we are living as co-workers with Christ, as fellow-helpers with God, as part of the noble army of martyrs who bear witness to the truth in all time, then our lives are full of interest. This gives sweetness and strength to all our days.” – James F. Clarke

“Happiness, let us understand this well, is as truly our portion here as above; it cannot fail to fall within the lot of those who have chosen for their portion Him whose nature is one with infinite, unalienable Joy. God, in communicating Himself to the soul, of necessity communicates happiness; and all souls in union with Him have returned to their central rest, and are happy, in exact proportion to the closeness and fulness of their union–happy, in other words, by so much as they have within them of God.” – Dora Greenwell

“Why should we go to heaven weeping, as if we were like to fall down through the earth for sorrow? If God were dead (if I may speak so, with reverence of Him who liveth for ever and ever,) we might have cause to look like dead folks; but “the Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock of our salvation.” None have right to joy but we; for joy is sown for us, and an ill summer or harvest will not spill the crop.” – Samuel Rutherford

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