

JULY 2022



THE GLORY OF JOY!

Dear Partner,

Have you ever had one of those moments where the Lord just gave you a brief nostalgia of the newness of your salvation? Let me explain. I often “miss” the days of when I first came to know the Lord. I find myself singing the songs from that season and reminiscing about memorable times spent in His Presence and with His people. And “Oh, the joy that floods my soul!”

Sometimes we get so “familiar” with life, our routines, the world’s systems, etc. that we don’t pause to “smell the roses.” In prayer I had mentioned to the Lord how I missed those days in the Church, in my walk, and even the songs we sang, the anointing that was felt, etc. And the other day, being who God is, He washed over me with that “nostalgia” of yesteryears. And truly, joy flooded my soul. I felt renewed, refreshed, recharged!

You know, there’s something about just the word **JOY** that creates excitement when it’s heard or spoken. It’s a subject not often taught in the Church today, it seems. But it is a very valuable fruit of the Spirit and essential to “living life the way God intended.” Why is the “joy factor” not “factoring” into the lives of many believers and the churches they attend? It seems that everyone has joy when they first begin their walk with Christ. Like Spring, that feeling of excitement, energy, and happiness just seems to “ooze” out of us. But after a while, after “church encounters,” backbiting Christians, sin, disappointments, distractions, and the cares of this world, many Christians become wary, dry, complacent, and even bitter (rather than joyful).

We have great churches which provide exciting worship services with dynamic preachers, energizing music, and diverse ministries and outreaches. We even have free snacks, special events, and some even Starbucks for the serious coffee-lover:) But what does all of this do for our joy? . . . NOTHING.

These are outward experiences . . . things that bring us a level of contentment or even happiness. They do not, however, have the ability to create, nor sustain, joy. **Joy is rooted in the heart.** It is our strength! (Neh.8:10) When we are weak, joy empowers us. When we're facing trials, it is our joy that gets us through. The Word says that Jesus endured the cross for the joy that was to come ("set before Him"). His ability to endure physical pain and abandonment in the time of suffering was because he valued what was to come. He valued JOY! The Bible says that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." Trials, tests, sorrows, and grief are all temporary --- but **joy is eternal!** And when we focus on the eternal, we can better endure the temporary. The nighttime only lasts for a little while. The morning is when all things become new again, and your joy returns.

We NEED JOY! And if we don't have it we need to find out how to get it, maybe why we lost it, and get it back!

I've experienced this even in my own life. I battled depression as a teenager. It was that sense of despair that actually caused me to call on the name of Jesus and be saved. This rebirth experience replaced the years of depression with unexplainable joy! This wonderful, joy-filled existence lasted for quite a few years, until I allowed the enemy a foothold again in my life. Depression then reared its ugly head and "the battle was on." But thanks to God's "amazing grace" I (we) won again! I am victorious through Christ!

And so are YOU! Do you have a joy that is uncontainable, untamable, and absolutely contagious? "The joy of the Lord is [our] strength" (Neh. 8:10). It helps us endure tough times. The Word says that Believers "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8). We should have such joy that it can't be talked about, only demonstrated! **It "can't be explained, only experienced."** **Your joy carries the glory!** Not only that, but it carries the fullness of glory! When unbelievers see a joy like this, how can they help but see Christ in us and want what we have? When they see joy, they see the Kingdom of God manifested (Ro. 14:17).

If the joy of the new birth seems distant to you (or someone you know), seek to restore it. Jesus came so that our joy would be full (Jn. 16:20), not EVAPORATING! And don't settle for "a little dab" because that won't "do you!" Seek for the FULLNESS of His joy!

Here are 3 ways that will help with the restoration of joy to Believers and to the Church:

1. **Read the Word!** (Jer. 15:16; Jn. 15:11, 17:13) Jeremiah said “When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight.” Joy can easily be restored as we continuously soak up the Word of God. **STAY IN THE WORD!** It’s your joy!
2. **Get in His Presence.** (Ps. 16:11) “In His presence is the FULLNESS of joy!” Get in His presence in your quiet time with Him; and be sure that the church you attend is all about having God’s presence.
3. **Fellowship with other saints** – especially those who have joy! (2 Jn. 12) Don’t get isolated! If you’re part of a Mega Church, get into some small groups. If your church doesn’t have small groups, ask if you can start one. Do what you need to do and go where you need to go to get good, joy-filled fellowship with other Saints!

I PRAY THAT YOUR JOY BECOME “UNSPEAKABLE”, AND FULL OF THE GLORY!

My prayer for you is that your joy be fully restored! And that people will ask you about why you’re so joy-FULL and you will be able to “give an answer for the hope that lies inside you.” Just as David did, we can ask God to “Restore the joy of [our] salvation.”

Let God take you back to the day you met Him! Let Him invade your space and infuse your life again with the joy of your salvation. And let that joy become your strength! And let it ooze out to others that they too may have their joy restored!

Do you need to be reminded of the JOY of your salvation today? Even if not, I would encourage you to take a moment and allow the joy of the Lord to strengthen you, revive your spirit, and refresh you.

Work the Power Within

Kim Robbins

P.S. We are still working out some technical things with the Partner Growth Tracks but we will have them soon and offer an extension if necessary. Thanks for your patience.