

## The Joy

### Introduction

Today I want to talk about something that we all need to exercise in our daily walk with God. I have seen all too many times people suffering from this terrible "disease" especially Christians. Even here today, in this place, there are some of you infected by the terrible "disease". What is it, I will tell you just now but...

This "disease" is killing us, it is killing our Christian walk and it is killing off our relationship with God. It is sapping our strength, stealing our life and happiness and making us ineffective in our daily walk with God and people. What is it? Let me tell you more....

This one thing is the very reason why Satan is attacking you because he knows once he has this, he can easily overpower you because he has won the battle for your soul! This one little insignificant thing will let people see no difference between you and your God and them themselves.

- What is this insignificant thing?
- What is this terrible disease that is killing our walk with God?
- What can we do to combat this thing that is sapping the very life blood of our Christian walk and making us ineffective?
- What is causing us and the world to look strangely the same?
- Why do people think we are crazy serving a God who does not take care of us and so they do not want our God because He is not use to us?

### The Joy of the Lord

What is this thing...? Let's turn to **Nehemiah 8:10** *"This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the **JOY** of the LORD is your strength."*

The secret to your and my Christian life, and the success of our walk with God is, the JOY of the Lord!!! The secret behind people seeing something different between you as a believer and them as unbelievers is your JOY!

If there is no difference between your joy and the world's – which they are happy when everything is going their way and everything is working fine, no one will want your God!

They must see and experience the change. Now I am not saying you must always be happy. But I am saying that in all circumstances there is a joy a relaxation in a higher Being in control of your life which gives you joy above and beyond our physical circumstances.

If you are down in the dumps and all doom and gloom because of the news or your circumstances. If you complain like the rest of the people around you – I assure you that you are not living the Christian life and you are not living by faith.

Jesus said in **Matthew 20:27-29**, I have come to give you life – we have the life of Jesus within us. While on earth and now even in heaven, Jesus Christ was extremely happy, the only Jesus' Movie or story that show that to us in the Matthew series.

### The Happy God

Unlike the picture the world has painted for us, or that we ourselves believe! God is a happy God! He is the happiest being in the entire universe. In His presence according to David is FULLNESS OF JOY – **Psalms 16:10**, God is a Happy God, Jesus is a Happy God and the Holy

Spirit is happy, why are you, the image and heir of God and his child so unhappy – Where is your joy.

The bible is full of verses about Joy, Joyfulness, and Happiness. Here are a few.

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| ❖ <b>1 Chronicles 16:27</b> | <b>Proverbs 15:20</b> |
| ❖ <b>Psalms 21:6</b>        | <b>Proverbs 27:11</b> |
| ❖ <b>Psalms 65:8</b>        | <b>Isaiah 35:10</b>   |
| ❖ <b>Psalms 126:5-6</b>     | <b>Isaiah 55:12</b>   |
| ❖ <b>Psalms 21:6</b>        | <b>Isaiah 61:7</b>    |
| ❖ <b>Habakkuk 3:18</b>      | <b>Acts 2:28</b>      |
| ❖ <b>Acts 13:52</b>         | <b>Romans 15:13</b>   |

### **Satan wants to steal your joy**

So my question to you today is, if the Joy of the Lord is your strength where do you think Satan will want to attack you in your Christian walk? Your Joy.

You see if Satan can rob you of your Joy he has basically won the battle. A person without joy is bound to live a life without fruit, i.e. telling others about God and thus he has won twice. He has robbed you of your joy and other to experience the Joy of Salvation.

Now I am not saying Satan will take away your salvation but would you rather go through life unhappy and get to heaven or would you like to be happy and go to heaven. The choice is yours.

But what I am saying is, that being unhappy and not joyful can lead you to give up on life, give up on God, give up on your Christian walk and character, and that could cost you, your eternal salvation

### **The Cross**

Even in our greatest trials, we can experience the Joy of the Lord, which is your strength. You might say Martin you are crazy, it cannot be a joy to die!

I do not know if you have read a book called "Foxies Book of Martyrs" but the most amazing thing about reading the accounts of people who were killed – burnt at the stake, beheaded, hung, shot, stabbed etc was the joy they had. Why?

Do you realise that when you come to the end of your life and you know you are God's child that you realise that your death will only be a stepping stone into something more amazing. More beautiful – unimaginable beautiful, do you think that death is so bad? No it is really your entrance into an eternal place with God.

Obviously if you do not know God, and I have read accounts of people who died without God, like the people executed at the Nuremberg trials, it was a time of Great fear and trembling.

Let's turn to a record in the Bible that we are all aware of, The Crucifixion. Let's first turn to **Hebrews 12:1-3** *"<sup>1</sup> therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and*

*sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."*

Can you believe that it was a joy for Jesus Christ to go to the cross on Golgotha as bad as it was, He went to His death with Joy?

Now you might say, Wow this is too good to be true, how can Jesus Christ or any person go to their death in Joy. The truth is that Jesus did, you see He saw beyond the pain and suffering to you and I and millions and millions of people who would put their faith and trust in Him and be saved. So yes, the crucifixion could and was a joy because Jesus saw beyond the His death and grave.

### **Fruit of the Spirit**

In fact the whole Bible is full of the word Joy, the word Joy appears more than 242 in the entire Bible. God instructs us to be happy. He commands us to be happy. He says that our Joy is our strength.... And many more things.

Joy is so important it is mentioned in the Fruit of the Spirit in **Galatians 5:22-23** *"<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."*

After Love it is the second major fruit mentioned, why is Joy so important? It is our joy that will carry us through to eternal life. It is joy that is the fuel of our Christian walk. It is our joy that will draw others to Christ.

Put yourself in an unbelievers shoes! You see this person who is supposed to be a Christian but there is no difference between his walk with God and you. He falls and fails but there is never joy in his life. That Christian is a sower person who never smiles and is always unhappy. Do you think that someone would like to server that God?

Do you think you will be able to convince someone that your life is something they would want? I very much doubt that.

### **Our Lives**

God wants you to live with Joy in your heart. If He made the trouble of putting so many verses in the Bible about joy, why would He want you not to be joyful?

As I said before God it the centre of All Joy and in His presence is Fullness of Joy, or Complete Joy.

So why are you so unhappy? Who or what has stolen your joy? Why are you not happy? What is the thing or things you want in your lives to be happy? What would it be.

### **Let's look at some verse**

We are commanded to keep God's commandments so that our Joy might be complete. You see when we are walking in God's divine plan and according to His will there is Joy and not just Joy but **Complete JOY**

**John 15:10** <sup>10</sup> *If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.*

You might say, well Pastor Martin I need this or that to be happy, or Pastor Martin God does not answer my prayers. I ask Him for things and He does not answer me and that is why I am unhappy. God says **John 16:23-25** <sup>23</sup> *In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. <sup>25</sup> "Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father."*

If you are His child, and you are and claim to be His child then He, Jesus Christ, has already given you a full measure of JOY, see **John 17:12-14**

<sup>12</sup> *While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. <sup>13</sup> "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the **full measure of my joy within them**. <sup>14</sup> I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.*

You see the natural state of a Christ should be joy, if there is not joy, Satan has stolen it and you must take it back. It is your right as a child of God. It is your right as a join Heir with Christ. It is your right as a believe to be joyful – ALL THE TIME.

You might say, Pastor Martin why must I be joyful, it is not a commandment. It was okay for Jesus to be happy but you know my situation.

Yes I do and God knows it even better and He says in **Romans 14:16-18**

<sup>16</sup> *Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. <sup>17</sup> For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, <sup>18</sup> because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.*

Pastor I have no money or income how can I be happy – **2 Corinthians 8:1-3**

*And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. <sup>2</sup> In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. <sup>3</sup> For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own,*

*Later in this same chapter is says <sup>9</sup> For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."*

Pastor I am experience trails and tribulation, I cannot be happy. **James 1:2-3** *"<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,<sup>a</sup> whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.*

Even our giving must be done with joy, but every church I have been in it looks like a funeral when the Pastor talks about tithes and offering when God is looking for a Joyful giver. See **2 Corinthians 9:7-8** *"<sup>7</sup> Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup> And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."*

### **Closing**

Beloved, it is time to tell your face that it should be happy. It is time to repent to God for not being thankful and happy for all the things He has given us, not there thing we do not have!

It is time we repent for being sad when in fact we should be the happiest people on earth!

I think it is time we as a church go on our knee, right now and repent to God for not allowing His joy to penetrate our lives and through our lives we allow this joy to reach the whole world.

Let's pray. Go on your knee if you want be go into a position you are comfortable with and start repenting to God for not being the joyful person He created. Repent for not displaying His joy to the world. Ask Him to put that joy into your heart again and allow you to draw all men to Him through this joy.....