

Joy message 2020

Today we begin with another James Dobson story. We want to share about God's gift of joy and the strength it is to us all.

Hebrews 12:1-3 New International Version (NIV)

12 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, ² 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. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

1 Thessalonians 2:19

For what is our hope, our **joy**, or **the** crown in which we will glory in **the** presence of our **Lord** Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

Nehemiah 8:10 [Full Chapter]

Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our **Lord**. Do not grieve, for **the joy of the LORD** is your strength."

Definition-a grounded sense of well being not an emotion, not an idea, in my soul not in my body produced by the holy spirit (fruit of the holy spirit), by causing me to see the beauty of Christ in the bible and in all things He does. I do not have immediate control over it. It causes strength to rise up in me so I can achieve the goals Jesus wants me to achieve.

Joy comes from God. People in our world use flaky and shifting happiness to mask for a replacement of joy. Even their happiness is founded on shifting elements so it too is iffy at best.

Back to the story

The mother had all kinds of dreams for her new baby but life gave her something else. She thought all was lost. Her life was just going to be different, not lost. Her perception of how things should be was different than what God had in mind. God had not forsaken her. He was showing

that He could bring joy no matter what. The daughter had joy too. It was not lost for either of them.

Joy doesn't leave because of hardship in our lives. It leaves when we allow the devil to steal it by getting us to focus on the trouble instead of the providing hand of God in our life. The devil gets us to focus on the problem and to forget all that God has done for us.

The joy of the Lord is our strength. Why? It propels us towards contentment regardless of the need of change in a situation we may have at the moment.

Happiness is like the fragrance a flower gives off. Joy is like the flower that is the source of the happiness. It can keep on giving regardless of weather or conditions.

Why do we need joy?

Jesus says if you have His joy, you will be able to have strength in hard times. Jesus said that trouble will come and when it comes, what will you do? If you want the best in life and be able to do what Jesus wants us to do, you will need strength and the JOY OF THE LORD IS YOUR STRENGTH. When people lose their joy, happiness will not substitute as it is fleeting and so without joy people begin to crumble, close into themselves, get lonely, feel forgotten, feel that nobody cares and on it goes.

When Jesus came to this earth, He proclaimed joy to the world. Why? Because Him coming to die for our sins would bring us new life, reason for living, a hope for eternity, and fulfillment in this present life.

He said in

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

2 Corinthians 9:8

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.

The world can not get joy unless they come under the lord's banner and become His children. Happiness is all they can strive for and their happiness can be affected by any circumstance that they encounter. VERY FLEETING.

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How should we view the concept of joy?

We should view it the same way Jesus did. After all, aren't we supposed to follow Jesus in all things?

When can you have joy or what can bring you real joy?

It is when we give to the point of self sacrifice.

Matthew 20:27-28 New International Version (NIV)

²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Matthew 10:39

Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

Jesus is saying here that when our life is focused on Christ's goals, we find our life fulfillment, but when it is focused on what we think we should have or do, we lose life fulfillment.

Joy comes when we are basing it on what is best and good for someone else. The question is, is that good a God based good that will be a wholesome result?

We are supposed to fix our eyes on Jesus who endured the cross because He saw the end result was awesome for us not Him. That brought Him joy.

He saw the Joy set before Him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and sat down at the right hand of God. We can't do well in trials if we don't realize that God has good for the end. Joy helps us. Joy is understanding that God will have a good result for all trials in our lives.

James 1:2-4 New International Version (NIV)

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Count it all joy. Why because good will come of it when we follow God. This propels us in God's way so we can be approved of God and not lose heart. Trials are not easy but to know that good will come of it because God is there for us, can mean great comfort and protect us from depression and other problems that can occur for those who think no one really can control the outcome for our life events that can arrive unexpectedly.

Joy. Jesus saw joy when He went to the cross. That is why He went thru with it. It was a Good thing he saw joy. When we know God is wanting to walk with us thru life and make us into a new creation and bring newness of life, it brings joy that gets us thru tough times.

We need it now. What are some things we can gain joy thru right now? Ask God for an understanding you need today about how to look at your things the way He does.

Christmas is such a big event worldwide and yet it is happiness and not joy that the world seeks after. The Christian is to seek after joy. It is what Jesus brings, is everlasting in value, and can resist even the hardest of times and still be there.

Joy is contagious

When you are around someone who is content and happy in life it tends to rub off on you. Joy is more powerful by far than happiness and will last even when trouble arrives. When the world sees it in us, it causes them to ask about it. That is GREAT.

Can joy be lost

Yes. If we measure our lives' contentment and fulfillment based on circumstances, then we can lose our joy. The devil loves to get us to think that way so He can get us to lose our joy. Jesus also values joy at a high level. He says the joy of the Lord is our strength.

The JOY OF THE LORD. Not the joy from our friend or the joy of our job etc. The focus we have in life has a lot to do with how secure our joy is.

This joy has an overwhelming supply available as it is from God who wants us to have an unlimited supply of it.

Conclusion

WE NEED JOY. God knows we do too. Christ brought us Joy. He offers it as a gift, but it must be received. Today let's consider how much we have. Are we trying to use happiness to be a substitute? How is our strength in following Jesus? In the story of the broken ballerina, there was pain for the mom as to what she had as a goal for her daughter but oh the joy she felt when her daughter was able to achieve so much and bring so much joy to the family even with a disability. The Joy of the Lord is our Strength and without it we are weak. At this time of year let's purpose in our heart to draw from The Lord Jesus more strength than we have before, seeking to focus our attention on Jesus' goals so our joy can be full. Jesus will only provide strength for the goals He has. We will lose our strength if we spend our energy and time on fruitless goals of our own making or expectations that are unwise. Our joy will increase and grow as we seek to accomplish what Christ wants us to, not shrinking back because of the trial in front of us but realizing the great end result that Christ wants us to seek after. Amen.