

## Joy

A lot of people talk about joy: “It was a joyous occasion.” “My grandkids bring me such joy.” “The joy of giving”. It’s also the root to our English words “enjoy” and “rejoice”. But what does it really mean to have joy in your heart?

This life offers many temporal attractions in an attempt to bestow happiness on us. If you find yourself wanting or needing the stimulants of this world, then you need to reconsider your relationship with God. This is how the Bible states it in John 15:10-12...

*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. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.*

It’s pretty clear what Christ was telling us about joy in our lives...that when His joy is in us, then our joy can become complete. The corollary truth—and just as important—is that it is impossible to have complete joy if we do not have the joy of Jesus in us. You’ll also notice that being loved is the precursor and loving others is a direct result of true joy.

The nickname my wife has so lovingly (and often too correctly) given me is “cranky-boy”. Of course I smirk and we snicker about it and it often lightens the mood. That said, I do need to own up to the fact that the persona I give 24/7 is supposed to be conveying Christ-like qualities.....yikes!

I like to think that I have the joy of Christ in my heart each and every day, and there’s no reason not to...except for the limitations I put on myself. Certainly God never stops loving me. What tangles me up is the “*loving others as God loves us*” command.

In Hebrews chapter 1 Paul explains the relationship God the Father has with his son Jesus Christ: “You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

That very same oil of joy which was imparted on Jesus can be found in each one of us who professes Him as our Lord. So do I have the joy of Christ in me? ...absolutely. Does it always show? ...that is something I need to strive for on a daily basis. I have the confidence in knowing that my joy comes from my Creator and God.

*Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. I Peter 1: 8,9*

Greg Morton

© March 1, 2012