



Anointed With Joy

In this article, I'll be sharing about the joy of the Lord and part of its role in the life of believers. I'll discuss both where it comes from and how it functions in our lives to empower us to live with righteousness so we are a pleasing aroma to the nostrils of the Father.

"The joy of the Lord is our strength." This is a phrase that pretty much every Christian has either read in the Bible or, at the very least, heard in a worship song. Often when we think of joy we just commonly attribute it to a high level of happiness. Although this is partially true, I feel that joy has been very much watered down to just a small temporary feeling and not an empowering force. We may be in a worship service and often times may see people break out into laughter. Which is very good. Church is a meeting place for people that are redeemed, forgiven, not going to hell, and going to heaven. Church should be the happiest place on the planet. However, as much as I love laughter in a meeting, it is not the fullness of joy. It's much more like a small drop of water in the ocean of God's joy. The only problem is what do you do when the meeting is over? What do you do when the goose bumps wear off and a worship leader isn't singing a catchy and encouraging song? Why don't we laugh when we see our bills or when trials and troubles come our way? The reason is because, due to immaturity, we've settled for an incomplete picture of God's joy.

So where does joy come from....Jesus of course! I know, you were expecting a much more deep and profound statement. There's no one more deep and profound than Him. In Psalms 16:11, David makes the statement, "found in Your presence is the fullness of Joy, and at

Your right side pleasures forevermore.” One day as I was reading this the Father spoke to me and said, “Aaron, who’s at my right side...?” As He said that I realized Jesus is right where the Father’s pleasure are. He Himself is the manifest expression of the Father’s pleasures both towards Him and us. Later the Father said to me, “Aaron... who’s seated with Him in heavenly places...?” (Eph 2:6) When He said that I thought no wonder Paul said in 1st Thessalonians 5:16, to Rejoice Evermore. We’re right in the “line of fire” of the Father’s pleasure and delight.

You were made just for God’s delight. He made you just because He wanted to be with you. You are the delight of His heart and the reward of His sufferings. I’d like to suggest that you’re his exceedingly great reward. You were made to be the joy of His heart, but He was slain to be the joy of yours. This is the power of joy. For the joy set before Him, Christ endured the cross. For both the reward of pleasing His Father and getting you for a bride, joy empowered Him to suffer for you. You were the joy that empowered Him. Before you were even born, you were a force and a thought in His mind that actually empowered God Himself to suffer on your behalf. Doing this, He could empower us to suffer for His name’s sake. This is the power of joy. Joy enables us to suffer with gladness. As it did with Jesus, true joy should drive us to our own cross. When joy doesn’t eventually drive you to deny yourself to please the Father, it is only a pale shadow of true joy. God gives us the oil of joy, according to Isaiah 61:3. When anointing oil is mentioned in the Bible, it is used in the context of being commissioned with an assignment and being prepared for burial. Just as Jesus was anointed for burial, joy is the oil that anoints us for our burial. Joy is what empowers you for trials and sufferings, because in the context of suffering and trials, all things are made new.

Joy empowers us for trials. I know what you're thinking, "oh no...trials..." I know, trials have become a four-letter word in the church. Anything that challenges us and our comfy-cozy Christianity can't be of God, right? Trials are necessary if we want to go to the next level in our relationship with God. Notice I said that and not "next level of ministry". That's because relationship is a bigger priority. Trials are the process of promotion. At the end of every trial and wilderness that we face, is a crown to lay at the feet of Jesus. The wilderness is the place of promotion because it is often our training ground.

King David, as a young boy, would tend his father's fields and watch over the sheep in the pasture. As he did this lions and bears would come and try to steal sheep. He would kill off these beasts to protect the sheep. Doing this is what prepared him to face Goliath. I like to think of this field as "The Father's Field Of Trials." It's in the Father's field that we face lions and bears that mature us for Goliath. If you never kill lions and bears and just avoid trials, you may not be in the Father's field. It may be time for us to get our hands dirty and get in the field.

Trials are the ordination process of the Father. It's going through trials that shaped David into the king He was meant to be. God has a very interesting way of ordaining people. When the prophet came to his house, God chose David to be the new king because Saul was such a people pleaser. People pleasing can rob you of your royal identity. I'd like to suggest to you that even though God used Samuel to anoint David outwardly, God used Saul to anoint David inwardly. What I mean by that is, Saul chased David for ten years. He attempted to murder him for an entire 10 years! This process of both trusting God to keep him alive as well as sparing Saul when David could have killed him, this is the process that anointed David

inwardly. This is the process that taught him how to act like royalty so when he became royalty he would be able to handle the job.

In the midst of trials or the wilderness, grace is found. This is seen in Jeremiah 31:2, as well as throughout much of Exodus. When Abraham finally received the promise of his son Isaac, God wanted him to sacrifice Isaac on the altar. Abraham was a man who trusted God and knew He would be faithful to His promises. So he set out to do as He was told. Isaac's name translated actually means "laughter." This is the process I mentioned earlier. First came the promise, which brought joy. Then joy led Abraham to an altar as it should do to us. As he was there, God provided a ram to take Isaac's place. He did this because after the joy comes the altar or wilderness, and provision is always found in the wilderness. This is the process of provision and promotion that leads to maturity which leads to God being able to trust us with more revelation and authority.

This place of promotion is not only beneficial for us, but we are empowered to intercede for others as well. I was reading Matthew 26:36-56 one day and the Lord started to get my attention. As I read it, it said that Jesus was praying in the garden of "Gethsemane." That word seemed to be jumping off the page at me. (By the way, when that happens, that usually means God is trying to speak to you, so pause and wait on Him in those moments.) I decided to study this word and was intrigued to find out what it means. The word actually translates into "oil press." This is the place Jesus sweated blood. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross. This is the place where the Father stopped speaking to Him and the weight of our sins was starting to press upon Him as this was the beginning mark of His sufferings up to the point

where He was going to give up the ghost. Here, in the garden called oil press, Jesus was pressed by our sins and the oil of His blood was pressed right out of Him. It's His blood that would press out of Him at this place to permanently anoint every generation of believers with joy and salvation. As oil ran down Aaron's, the priest, beard to anoint future generations, His blood ran down out of Him to anoint us all with His Spirit. And what is one of the Spirit's fruits? Joy, of course. This act is why Paul could rightly say we're supposed to rejoice evermore and in all things give thanks. In our pursuit of following Christ, He will drive us into the wilderness or oil press. As He leads us here, we're instructed to watch and pray. When we are functioning in the place of unshakable happiness, we carry a very strong authority to intercede. He says here to Watch: which is to use wisdom and understanding to access a situation. He says here to pray: which is to, while functioning in the joy He anointed us with, use our authority or influence to bring change to a situation. Joy from the Spirit leads us into the wilderness as it did Jesus. He in the wilderness comes temptation to act outside of our identity. However, also here in the wilderness are tests that bring promotion and catapult us into our destiny as Kings and Priests. Kings are ones who minister to people. Priests are ones who minister to God, and joy is the catalyst that starts all of this.

I pray that you found this both encouraging and enlightening. God has such amazing things in store for every believer. He really never intended for you to live a life of mediocrity. He longs to empower you with His joy so He can give you tests to promote you so you will be able to handle the places of authority He wants to give you. He has great gifts that he wants to be able to give you, but first He must mature you so the place of promotion won't overwhelm and destroy you. According to Proverbs 10:28, gladness (joy) is the hope (or rightful inheritance) of

the righteous. Will You take the time to know Him? Will you receive the joy He has for you? Will you allow Him to prune and mature you? I hope your answers were yes. I pray that He empowers you to be faithful till the end.

Be Blessed Richly In Christ,

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