

I HAVE NO GREATER JOY
(Confessions of a Cross-Bearer, Hodge and Messer)
Psalm 89:15-18

INTRODUCTION

- A. What would you share with a person regarding the Christian walk, in the hopes of encouraging them to make a commitment to Christ?
- B. If you were to list 10 outstanding “characteristics” of a Christian, what would they be?
 - 1. Is joy on your list?
- C. Joy and Christianity must be synonymous, 3 John 4.
 - 1. To work is one thing; but, to work *joyously* is another.
 - 2. Serving is beautiful WHEN done with joy.
 - 3. Sad Christianity is a contradiction.
 - 4. Joy may well be the hallmark of Christian obedience.

I. BIBLE EXAMPLES OF JOY.

- A. Jesus Christ.
 - 1. Angels announce the birth of Christ, Luke 2:8-14.
 - 2. His life was a life of joy, John 15:11.
 - 3. Jesus died on the cross in joy, Hebrews 12:1-2.
 - a. The joy set before Him.
 - b. Re-united with God, the Father, Heb. 1:3.
 - c. Bringing many sons to glory, Heb. 2:10.
 - d. Victory over Satan [death], Heb. 2:14-15.
 - e. The saved entering heaven “with songs of everlasting joy”, Isa. 35:10.
- B. The Apostle Paul.
 - 1. Sweetest letters of Paul written from jails.
 - a. Commanded over and over to rejoice.
 - b. Paul used one form of “joy” 4 times in 104 verses in Philippians.
 - c. The fruit of the Spirit includes joy, Galatians 5:22.
 - d. The kingdom of God is joy, Romans 14:17.
 - 2. Various functions of Christians.
 - a. Romans 12:10-13; 1 Cor. 12; Ephesians 4.
 - b. These gifts are to be used and enjoyed!
 - c. ***Joy is based on whose we are, not who we are.***
 - i. Titus 2:14
 - ii. 1 Cor. 6:20
 - iii. Gal. 2:20

II. WHAT IS THIS JOY?

- A. The glory of Christianity is joy in the midst of pain.
 - 1. James 1:2-4 – looking to the end result.
 - 2. Psalm 30:5
 - 3. Romans 15:13, God of hope fills with joy.
 - 4. Philippians 4:4, “*Rejoice in the Lord always...*”
- B. Joy is Selfless.
 - 1. My joy is in their joy. There is no joy in selfishness.

- a. Phil. 4:1, church – his joy and crown.
 - b. Phil. 1:4, prayed for them in joy.
 - c. Phil. 1:25, joy for them in their faith.
 - d. Phil. 2:2, their faithfulness fulfilled his joy.
- 2. Daily examples of joy in others.
 - a. Parents in the goodness of their children.
 - b. Teachers in the goodness of their students.
 - c. Preachers and elders in the growth of the church.
 - i. 1 Thess. 2:19-20
 - ii. 1 Thess. 3:9
- 3. ***Joy is a lifestyle.***
- C. Joy is Walking in Truth.
 - 1. Truth is not merely to be debated, but to be lived.
 - a. John 10:10
 - b. 2 John 2; 3 Jn.3:18 – abides in us; we live...
 - c. ***Zeal in faith produces joy untold!***
 - 2. One cannot be faultless; but, he can be blameless.
 - a. 1 John 1:4 (6-9)
 - b. Col. 1:11
 - 3. Joy is the neglected principle of a Christian life.

CLOSING

- A. I've Got the Joy ... Down in My Heart.
 - 1. It is not just for VBS!
 - 2. Psalm 16:8-9
- B. Is it possible the reason for a lack of joy in our lives, is that we still have one foot in the world, while trying to have the other foot in heaven?