

The Christian and the Joy of the Lord

Introduction

- A. The Bible constantly reminds the believer of the importance of the joy of the Lord. In fact, one of the characteristics of the true believer, is the presence of this spiritual joy in his daily life.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. John 15:11

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Romans 14:17

- B. It is important to understand that joy is more than a feeling. While it is certainly related to our emotions - the basis of our joy is not found there - but in our relationship with God. Note how this is seen in the two verses written out above.

- C. Why should the believer rejoice?

I. We are to Rejoice because of Our Salvation, I Peter 1:5,6.

Who (the believer) are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice . . .

Comment: Here we are reminded that an understanding of salvation will cause one to rejoice. The verses do not state what we are to "feel" about salvation - but what we know about our relationship with God. When we think of the need, the cost, the value, the provision, the results, and the relationships of salvation then - we understand why we should greatly rejoice.

II. We are to Rejoice because Our Names are Whitten in Heaven, Luke 10:20.

Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Comment: The disciples had returned from their preaching mission and were telling how they found that demons were subject to them in the use of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The verse before us is the instruction of the Lord Jesus. It was not a rebuke so much as a reminder of that which was much more important and the basis for their victory over demons. This should cause us to rejoice.

III. We are to Rejoice because of Our Relationship with Jesus Christ, I Peter 1:7,8.

. . . Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Comment: While we do not "see" the Lord Jesus with our physical eyes we believe in His existence, His Word, His provision for us, and His presence with us. This verse describes the believer's joy as related to believing, being unspeakable, and full of glory.

IV. We are to Rejoice because of Our Involvement in Fruitbearing, John 4:35,36.

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest. Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

Comment: The believer has been given the ministry of reconciliation and made an ambassador for Jesus Christ (II Cor. 5:18-20). When we live according to the truth and explain the plan of salvation to people - God will use our witness to bear fruit. This is a cooperative ministry of some sawing and some reaping. We rejoice together.

V. We are to Rejoice because of Our Knowledge of the Truth, I Cor. 13:6.

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.

Comment: One of our greatest possessions is the truth. In every area of life the truth is a necessity for success. We have the revelation of truth in the Lord Jesus Christ. When we practice the truth we are promised that it will cause rejoicing in our life.

VI. We are to Rejoice because of Our Glorious Future, Romans 5:2.

By whom (the Lord Jesus) we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Comment: Here our future is described as being characterized by "the glory of God." This is the content of our "hope." Because of our relationship with the Lord Jesus and His grace we know we can live so that glory and honor is brought to Him. We must seriously work so that this is true in all areas of our life.

VII. We are to Rejoice because of Our Reward in Heaven, Matthew 5:11,12.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

Comment: These are strange verses indeed - rejoice because of being persecuted. We are being taught by this that God is in control and that He is faithful. We may be persecuted because of our relationship with Jesus Christ and practice of the truth - but God will use all of that for our good and give us a reward in heaven.

VIII. We are to Rejoice because of Our Trials, I Peter 4:12,13.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Comment: Trials are a way wherein we are involved in suffering for the Lord Jesus and suffering as He did. This is a privilege that is .. not really understood now. We are told to rejoice now and to anticipate greater joy with He returns.

Conclusion: We are often exhorted to "rejoice" (I Thess. 5:16)

Victor M. Matthews