

Words of Truth



Happiness Is Powerful

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Sorrow can swallow up a person (II Corinthians 2:7). You can see this fact very clearly when you study the Book of Job. As you begin studying the Book of Job, he is faithful and strong (Job 1-2). After his ailments begin weighing on him, he curses the night in which he was conceived (Job 3:1-10). He wished he had died at birth (Job 3:11). Job went on to say: *"Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members are as a shadow"* (Job 17:7). That's not fun to read. Yet, there are people who profess to be Christians that sometimes talk this way.

People who walk about sad and depressed have not thought about the effects that such a demeanor has on their spiritual and physical health. The inspired word of God says: ***"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad... A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken... For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death"*** (Proverbs 12:25, Proverbs 15:13, and II Corinthians 7:10).

There are times when we ought to be sad (Ecclesiastes 3:4). We can sorrow over our sins when we turn to God in repentance (Joel 2:12). We can sorrow in others being in sin as well (I Samuel 15:35 and Romans 9:1-3). While we may have a sense of joy over a loved one's death if they're faithful (cf. Psalms 116:15), it is also right to mourn our loss when we lose one we love in the flesh (Ecclesiastes 7:1-4 and John 11:34-35). However, the overall mindset of a Christian needs to be one of happiness. Notice these two Scriptures: *"Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD... He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he"* (Psalms 144:15 and Proverbs 16:20). Obviously, we know Christians should be happy people. Now, let's focus a bit on the good a joyful mind can do for us as God's people.

A Merry Heart Doeth Good Like Medicine

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones... The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear" (Proverbs 17:22 and Proverbs 18:14)? You can obviously see how a broken and wounded spirit is harmful to us. However, let's focus on the merry heart. If you find yourself looking for the perfect medication for bad times, a merry heart is it. You cannot find a merry heart at your local Pharmacy. You can only find such a heart through an obedient relationship with God (Proverbs 29:18 and John 13:16-17).

When we have a joyful relationship with God nothing will be able to break our spirit. Whether it be temptation or even persecution, the mindset of a faithful Christian is to find joy in overcoming all things (Luke 6:22-23, Acts 20:22-24, James 5:11, I Peter 3:14, and I Peter 4:14).

As we consider what a merry heart can do, think about Paul and Silas when they were wrongfully imprisoned. Notice: *“And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them”* (Acts 16:19-25). Did Paul and Silas crack and get depressed? No, they prayed and sang praises to God. Why did they find joy in such a terrible situation? What was not taken from them? Paul and Silas might have been in prison, but their joy is in the Lord (Romans 5:11). Regardless of our situation, we should have a continual feast of joy.

How Does A Continual Feast Sound?

“All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast” (Proverbs 15:15)? Isn't that a wonderful Scripture to consider? Instead of walking about like you are in a continual funk, why not have continual joy? If we are faithful to God, we are happy because He is our hope (Psalms 146:5). From true wisdom to godly fear (Proverbs 3:13 and Proverbs 28:14), we have plenty of items on our table to feast upon. We should have that pleasant look and satisfied mindset when we consider everything that God has given us to feast upon (Hebrews 13:5-6). Since we have a full spiritual meal always before us, we should be able to overcome all adversity. Moreover, we should have great joy in what is yet to come for those of us who continue to faithfully serve the Lord (Romans 2:7).

Joy Over The Things To Come

You've had a bad day. That feeling of sadness is overcoming you. You know that happiness is strong enough to let the sun arise on your bad day, but you're struggling to look around you and find things to be happy about. Well, stop looking around you and think of what is in the future for you. Let's allow God's word to prove this point: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:** That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of 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:** Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls”* (I Peter 1:3-9).

Conclusion

Happiness is truly powerful. So is sorrow. The question really comes down to which power you want to rule in your life. Paul and Silas were able to sing praises to God while being wrongly punished. Singing praises to God is a statement of joy (James 5:13). Won't you allow the joy of God to rule in your life so that you can enjoy the medicine that a merry heart offers?