

REJOICING

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

The Bible has much to say about rejoicing – it is the act or outward expression of the joy that supernaturally indwells us even in the seeming worst of times. In James, we are instructed to consider it pure joy when we face trials of many kinds. Paul and Silas, while locked away in prison, rejoiced in that they could suffer for the name of Jesus; the apostles rejoiced because they had been counted worthy of suffering for the name of Jesus.

To be happy is an emotion based on current or developing circumstances – a general sense of security, well-being, or other conditions that invoke a good feeling. Rejoicing in all kinds of adversity is entirely different – it is a supernatural power that enables a prevailing sense that God is in control, loves us, and abides in us. Mary, mother of Jesus, spoke of such rejoicing when she said, “...and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.”

The often cited chapter of love, 1 Corinthians 13, tells us that love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. Such a message gives distinction between the things that invoke rejoicing and those that do not. Evil, wickedness, and the host of such thoughts and actions are not stimuli for rejoicing; indeed, these things should render sorrow, remorse, grief, and contrition among those who observe and partake. But truth is a stimuli for rejoicing.

Isaiah delighted in the Lord and he rejoiced in God. He described this rejoicing as like that of a bridegroom that rejoices over his bride. Yes, marriages and births are generally happy times, but these events invoke a much greater degree of rejoicing for each and all should realize the magnitude, the blessings, and the gift(s) to us all.

Rejoicing is not an emotional response, but is pre-disposition or condition whereby the gifts the Holy Spirit are at work. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control are all represented in the life of one filled with Spirit; these fruits of Spirit are available and present in the best of times and the worst of times...and all the time.

In keeping with the event of a wedding or marriage, the Book of Revelation describes the wedding of the Lamb (Jesus) and his bride (the church) as a time of great rejoicing for those who are present.

Rejoice, Rejoice, and again I say rejoice – for he is God and worthy to be praised

In a

WORD

H. Kirk Rainer

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