

Keeping Your Joy!

Friday, 2:20 pm

As the day presents its challenges I realize that the joy I have been bopping around in since early morning is not the case for everyone. I can feel those realizations bring some dampening, or questioning if I am being insensitive, etc.—the undermining process being launched. What I heard from the Lord when I asked about one of the factors, was:

Do not lose your joy in Me whatever happens with anyone else.

Yes, Lord. I would love that. My joy takes such a beating and has for years. So sad, but the time with You and the music that so frees my spirit are holding onto joy, and I thank You, Lord.

Saturday morning, 4:25

Lord, talk to me about not losing my joy in You. You told me not to lose it yesterday, so teach me how!

It seems like a very key thing this morning because the assault is relentless and brutal and certainly does not go with or produce joy. Show me how it works, Lord, because I know it does, and I began to see the power of it yesterday—just a glimpse, but I did see it and want to get hold of it and extend it to a solid understanding and way of being.

It must rest on Me, not circumstance.

It comes from alliance with the One who has overcome all circumstances and remained unmoved. It comes from believing deeply that I will empower you and lead you through all the assaults and from being as willing to face assaults as you are willing to tuck in with the glory places—willing to go and confident that I know the way.

The joy is glorious when all things come together and match, as they did yesterday morning, but joy can remain strong and stable when the earth shakes as well.

That is what I need to learn.

The key is willingness to persevere in the face of opposition, counting on Me to know the way, facing Me and what I will do with the situation, more than facing the circumstances that oppress and ARE a high contrast to My love and grace. You must not let circumstances define God, not let events and attitudes around you get used to pose the question: "Where is God? Or why is He letting this happen, which subtly separates; rather, "Lord, how will You win *Your* purposes out of this, confident and joyful that I surely will and following Me into those outcomes.

Hmm.... Such a tall order, but certainly better than getting swallowed up by circumstances and separated from or in any way grouching at You because I don't like the circumstances. Not doing so much of that anymore, but I do get moved into discouragement or anger and the paralysis that goes with both, interrupting joy and the pursuit of Your purposes.

Stay here with Me through *all* the debris, yours *and* theirs, knowing that I work good out of what is intended for evil, joyful that You have such a One and seeking Me for My purpose in it rather than giving up inside. Push through to seeing My purpose manifest and rejoice in My presence and authority to deliver such outcomes.

I'm reminded of something someone said to me the other night, over a non-essential store search—"you give up too easily." That is true in some ways, not true in others where I will not give up, though I may not stand there in joy.

So there is the fighting through side of joy in You. It is over staying with You, joying, delighting in the One who is able and will always lead through, being willing to BE led through rather than getting lodged in "this should not be happening" and angry that it is—a sure pit for losing joy.

I would like to be that kind of person, but I am not, Lord. It appears that I have some serious and deep down growing up to do. Getting easily defeated like that is why I don't bring more things to completion. I can see that this morning, but even if I do get them through it is too often at the cost of my joy.

I see how persevering You are, and the odd thing is that in ministry, I am much more that way—persevering and patient, continuing and continuing. Not so steadfast over my *own* situation.

So there is the joy when all the circumstances flow together with Your presence and glory, and there is the joy of seeking and persevering *with* the One who will always work His purposes no matter what it looks like—confident and joyful in that.

-
-

As I was contemplating staying with Him through bleakness, I began to hear the birds waking up, cheerful over the morning light. I went over to look through the blinds to see what kind of sunrise might be forming. There were broken clouds, so I decided to open the blinds and watch. It started out gray and unremarkable, and I thought to go back to my writing and pondering. But slowly and gradually it began to turn and turn until the whole horizon was on fire, and the glow reached up into the higher clouds. I excitedly went back and forth from the office window to the bedroom window, a slightly different view from both, seeking an unobstructed view. It was a picture in the sky of what He was showing me about persevering, looking to see what He will bring out of seeming darkness. The day dawns, and darkness is dispelled, the light and truth of *God reappear* and take their place, bringing life and hope, encouraging our hearts, if we see the hand of *God* in it. I had to stay with it to see the glory, which is His whole point. The joy comes from being with Him in it, whatever it looks like and then seeing His glory manifest. A picture of it goes on every morning, speaking of saying something over and over, though some mornings say it more spectacularly than others. Such was the case this morning, and I "happened" to be awake and watching!

Thank You, Lord, for both lessons—the spoken understandings and the visual!

-
-

I see another aspect of what You are showing me. The hook is self—when our personal comfort level is tampered with, we tend to get upset almost immediately. It's the opposite of seeking whatever activity and purpose You are holding onto and being willing to be in it together with You. And the challenges are worked by the enemy to get us doubting *God* or letting Him be misrepresented in our sight. Willing to walk through the challenges, seeking the works of *God*, knowing He will win, or resentful of the challenges and somewhat or directly blaming *God* for them, which will surely distance, dampen joy, cause us to feel put upon or victimized and not cared about. What a picture that is, Lord, one I am personally familiar with and hear all the time! Yes, there it is, self and comfort for self at the center of things and being the natural plumb line by which everything is measured. What a picture, Lord!

-
-

Now comes the challenge to live in what I am seeing; the day, largely begun, will test it routinely. Remind me at every turn to hang onto You, Lord, to rejoice in who You are and that You are within *and* at my side working Your purposes!