

THE BEST WAY TO FIND HAPPINESS

by Call of Hope

Everybody wants to experience real joy. Yet you can see how rare joy is. Most people do not possess it. They hurry from one amusement to another failing to reach true happiness.

A young man owning a factory told me, "I looked for happiness everywhere but could not find it. I am fed up with the world. I hate the lack of meaning and sincerity and the emptiness of this life." I replied, "So that's how you feel. Have you really looked for it and not found it? You are like the princess who described life, 'People search for their goals in love, honour and fortune, but they end up laden with sin and worry.' If sin did not exist, there would be more happiness in the world, for sin destroys happy lives."

Yet there is one who can give you enduring joy, the Lord Jesus Christ. He declares, "**I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete**" (John 15:11). Here we discover two truths: joy comes from him, and he wants to give it to you. His coming to earth brought joy. At his birth the angel announced, "**I bring you good news of great joy**" (Luke 2:10). So Christ is the source of true joy. The moment a sinner repents and gives his life to Christ, heaven's joy flows into his heart. Forgiveness brings peace and eternal oneness with God.

A young man was living in sin. This bothered him, and he saw the evil of his ways as revealed by God's word. After confessing his sins before the Lord, he joyfully shouted, "I don't know how this great happiness has come to me. I feel as if a great load has been lifted from me. How happy I am!" Through the forgiveness of his sins, a deep joy had entered his life and he could live in this joy. In the forgiveness of sins your joy finds a firm foundation. Christ does not offer you only a momentary joy, but happiness that stays through all the changes of life.

The apostle Paul was full of joy. This began when he met Christ on the Damascus road. Christ gently rebuked him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:4). Saul was fighting against the Lord and killed his followers. On seeing Christ he was shocked, and for three days he was blind and could neither eat nor drink. Joy flooded his heart as he received assurance that Christ redeems through the shedding of his blood. His sight came back. Great joy filled his heart and never left him, despite all of life's problems, hurts and dangers. Some years later we find him a prisoner in Rome, bound in chains to a soldier. He did not complain or lose hope in his horrible state, but lived in the circumstances willingly, patiently and

cheerfully for the privilege of suffering for Christ's sake. No letter is so full of joy as that which he wrote to the Philippians while in prison. He uses the word "joy" several times in this book. "I rejoice. Yes, I will continue to rejoice" (Philippians 1:18). He commands his readers, "**Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!**" (Philippians 4:4). Paul showed that true Christianity is a religion of joy.

You may ask, "Is it possible for one to be happy all the time? Is that not too much to expect?" No, if our life is in Christ, we shall experience in his daily fellowship that "**the joy of the Lord is our strength.**" Who lives under the guidance and care of the Lord accepts joy and trouble believing that "all things work together for good to those who love God" (Romans 8:28). This was aptly expressed by a Christian poet who lived in Europe during the Thirty Years War. Hunger was everywhere; bread was being made from flour mixed with tree bark. Diseases were everywhere, and the dead were thrown into one big grave. The poet had lost his wife and four children, but even this horror did not rob him of joy and trust. He wrote, "Why should I sorrow when I have Christ? Who can take him from me, my shepherd and my joy? He is mine and I am his, none can separate us. My heart overflows with joy, and cannot be sad. I am filled with praise and song. The Lord, my light, shines on me." You can see from this man's experience the reality of continuing joy.

A servant of the Lord was obliged to have both legs and arms amputated, but she did not lose hope or complain against the Lord as a result. When a wealthy lady visited to comfort her, the amputee replied with a shining face. "My dear sister, I lack for nothing for I am full of his joy." How could this woman have such joy in circumstances of this sort? Only Jesus could give such joy and peace of heart.

Do you realise from what we have written that it is possible to have constant joy? Jesus Christ is ready to give you this if you ask him. Try praying and asking, "Give me real joy. I surrender all to you, all that prevents your joy in my life." Confess your sins before him. Commit your life into his hands, and you will find that Christ will give you pardon for your sins and lasting joy. You will praise him and say, "Christ is my joy and my future hope."