

Seven Keys to Joy

Harmony M.B.C., October 19, 2008 (Morning)

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John 15:5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

John 15:8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

John 15:9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

John 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

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

A thing that seems totally out of sync with a lot of the Lord's people today is this expectation expressed by our Lord in verse 11 of our text. Throughout the 4 gospel books, He lectures the disciples about many things, teaching them the way of spiritual business, the secrets of the Kingdom, the inner truths about being children of God. Among those things we find this jewel here in our text in which He explains to them what it takes to get a full measure of joy in their lives. But, it seems that so many of God's people today are not happy. They show very little joy in their lives. The lack of joy shows up in their conversation, which is so lacking in sentences which praise the Lord; sentences which are about the Lord; sentences which are testimony that they are experiencing the joy of the Lord in their lives.

I believe it is important for us to take a look at how we as God's people can lay hold on full joy in the Lord. May the Holy Spirit help us to look at the seven keys to such joy as we notice:

A. The first key to having full joy (v. 7) “**If ye abide in me....**”

- For the believer: we need to settle this issue in our hearts and establish within our minds that we do abide in Christ (be rid of uncertainty; be rid of the kind of doubt that comes from not totally embracing the truth of how secure we are in Christ because it is He who has sealed that security)

John 10:27-28 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and **they shall never perish**, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

- For those who may be in doubt about whether they have a relationship with Christ: This is the starting point.

B. The second key to the joy He wishes for us (v. 7) “**...and my words abide in you,....**”

- Jesus' words living inside us can repeatedly come to us and fill us with joy

C. The third key (v. 7) “ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.**”**

- Receiving answers from Christ and knowing it is a deep source of joy

How many of you are getting from Jesus what you ask?

What are you asking? (The frame of reference for asking must be “abiding” in Him, and His words “abiding” in us)

Jesus' promise in John 14:13-14 is still legitimate today: “**And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.**” But, we need to understand how that works in order to experience the joy that getting those answers can bring. Peter, in Acts 3:16 gives us the spiritual formula (Peter and John have just been instrumental in calling down the power of Jesus Christ to heal a lame man): “**And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.**”

D. The fourth key (v. 9) “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you:....**”**

Contemplating the love of Christ for us will bring the joy

E. The fifth key (v. 9) “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.**”**

- Having the sense of really being His disciple is a source of joy
- Not feeling it will rob you of joy

F. The sixth key (v. 9) “...continue ye in my love.**”**

What does this mean? How can we do it? This is all about overt behavior. It is about constancy in certain behavioral expressions.

(Answer the question as to how Christ's love is manifested in this world. That is how it is done. Take a walk through 1 Cor. 13:1-8).

G. The seventh key (v.10) “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love....**”**

This is about a constant state of being. Joy is full when we abide in His love. We do that by keeping his commandments.

Additional Verses:

Rom 12:15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

1Co 12:26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

1Co 13:4-6 Charity..Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Php 3:1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.

Php 3:3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Php 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice.

Jas 1:9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

Jas 1:10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

Teaching: A proper spiritual attitude will produce joy whether we are poor or rich. Whether we get to this joy or not will depend on our perspective

1Pe 1:3 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,

1Pe 1:4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

1Pe 1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1Pe 1:6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

Trials dull our joy. But, the cause for having joy is still there. When we forget that, the joy can be smothered by heaviness.