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Extreme Makeover: Spirit Edition (Gal 5: 19-26) (part 3) "Joy"

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Rom 5:1-5 NLT

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. 2 Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

3 We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us--they help us learn to endure. 4 And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation. 5 And this expectation will not disappoint us. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

INTRODUCTION:

I want to talk to you today about Joy. Joy in spite of the difficulties of life. You know it is going to be a bad day when you put your pants on backwards and they fit better. You know it is going to be a bad day when your horn goes off accidentally when you are behind a group of Hell's Angels driving on the freeway.

There is a difference between happiness and joy.

Happiness is...

- a) ...shallow
- b) ...external without internal depth
- c) ...based on chance
- d) ...dependent on circumstances

Joy is...

- a) ...deep
- b) ...internal with external expression
- c) ...based on choice
- d) ...dependent on Christ

Let's take a closer look at what the Bible means by Joy. We'll see that the Scripture-style Joy-life is not only deep and abiding, but thrilling and exciting.

Biblical Words for Joy:

1. The Hebrew – *simchah* – (sim-khaw') and the Greek - *χαρά* -(chara) (khar-ah') literally mean: MIRTH, MERRINESS, delight, to rejoice (Isaiah 9:3a; Matthew 2:10; Luke 2:10).

These are the most common Hebrew and Greek expressions for joy... found dozens of times throughout Scripture. They speak of an experience that radiates into laughter. When Isaiah prophesied the coming of Jesus, he prophesied that it would bring mirth, merriness:

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light...you have...increased their
simchah (joy) -Isaiah 9:3a

This verse is the root of the greeting “Merry Christmas”. It was with joy that the angels announced the birth of Jesus:

*I bring you good tidings of **χαράν μεγάλην [charan magaleen](great joy)**. -Luke 2:10*

2. The Hebrew – *sameach* – literally means: SHINE (Isaiah 9:3b).

Let’s look at Isaiah 9:3 again and we see a second instruction to have joy over the coming of Jesus.

*You have...increased their joy; they **sameach (shine)** before you...
as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. -Isaiah 9:3b*

You have seen a person’s countenance shine and glow with joy.

3. The Hebrew – *gil/giyl (gheel)* and the Greek - **σκιρτάω** - *skirteesate (skeer-tah-sate)* - literally means: LEAP FOR JOY (Habakkuk 3:17-19; Luke 6:23).

We know what it is to *gil*, to **σκιρτάω (skirteesate)**. A doctor on his rounds came into a hospital ward one evening, shaking his head. “There’s an old man out there by the vending machines and he’s putting door bills into the money changer. Every time he gets his quarters he shouts “Jackpot” and leaps and dances around... that is *gil*, **σκιρτάω (skirteesate)**. The nurses chuckled at the crazy old guy and forgot all about him.

A few hours later, on their way to coffee break, they saw a repairman in front of the vending machines. They asked him why he was working so late. “I have to get this money changer fixed,” he said. “It’s been giving a dollar-fifty in quarters every time someone puts in a dollar bill.”

That *gil*, **σκιρτάω (skirteesate)** is easy to understand...but it is used in a most peculiar way in Scripture... The Hebrew – *gil* – is used in the Old Testament of course at a time of absolute desperation:

*Though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls,
yet I will...**gil (leap for joy)** in God my Savior. -Habakkuk 3:17-18*

The Greek - **σκιρτάω** - is employed by Jesus to instruct our response to times when we are *poor, hungry, weeping, hated, excluded, insulted and rejected...*

*...Rejoice in that day and **σκιρτάω (leap for joy)** because great is your reward in heaven.
-Luke 6:23*

4. The Hebrew – *rua (roo-ah)* – literally means: SHOUT (Psalm 100:1).

***Rua (shout for joy)** to the Lord, all the earth.*

We are familiar with *rua* – that’s what we do at sporting events when our team scores... YA!!

That’s joy, “Scripture-style:” shining, shouts and singing, leaps and laughing. There is a tremendous JOY VOID in our society today. That’s why our world is so dedicated to

alcohol...even though it takes millions of lives every year. That's why the disproportionate emphasis on sports and entertainment and the salaries we are willing to pay those who entertain us. These things provide relief and distraction from the troubles of life, but they produce no joy.

THE SCRIPTURE-STYLE JOY-LIFE (Romans 5:1-5):

1. The Scripture-style Joy-life begins with the Grace of God (Romans 5:1-2a).

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. -Romans 5:1-2a (NIV)

What's that got to do with joy? There is nothing like the joy of knowing the grace of God. Of having peace with God, of having the relationship with God that you were created to enjoy.

Two words with the same root:

The Greek $\chi\alpha\rho\alpha$ -chara-(khar-ah) means: JOY.

The Greek $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$ -charis (Khar-ece) means: GRACE.

You can see the similarity between the two words...both joy and grace come from the same root. If you've received grace, you've received joy!

I can remember the terrible inner ache of the "JOY VOID" in my life. I finally came to ask for God's forgiving GRACE and JOY within. I prayed Psalm 51 as the cry of my JOY-VOID life:

My sin is ever before me...wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear JOY and GLADNESS;

that the bones which thou hast broken may REJOICE...

Restore unto me the JOY of thy salvation. -Psalm 51:3,7,10

There is nothing better than the joy of the grace of God.

2. The Scripture-style Joy-life ends with the Glory of God (Romans 5:2b).

we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory. -Romans 5:2b(NLT)

Friends, there is a great day coming. People of the first century continually tried to put out Paul's joy. Think of the trouble he endured with joy.

I have . . . been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked...I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. -2 Cor 11:23-28

What was Paul's conclusion throughout all this?

... our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

-Romans 8:18

As a Christian, you have the joy of knowing . . . **THERE IS A GREAT GLORY COMING!**

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Paul Yonggi Cho describes the brutality of the Communist regime toward Christians in North Korea. One minister's family was captured and the Communist leaders put them on what they call the "People's Trial."

This time they dug a large hole, putting the pastor, his wife and several children in. The leader then spoke, "Mister, all these years you misled the people with the superstition of the Bible. Now publicly disclaim it or you, your wife, and your children will be buried alive. Make a decision!"

All of his children blurted out, "Oh Daddy! Daddy! Think of us! Daddy!" Think of it. If you were in his place, what would you do?

This father was shaken, he put up his hand to stop those shoveling the dirt on them, "Yes, yes, I'll denounce..." but before he could get another word out his wife nudged him, "Daddy! Say NO!" "Hush Children," she said. "Tonight we are going to have supper with the King of kings, the Lord of lords!"

She lead them in singing "In the Sweet By and By," her husband and children joining in as the Communists buried first the children and then as the dirt rose past their necks their voices were silenced on this earth but came alive in the Glory of God in Heaven.

Almost all those who watched this execution, themselves became Christians, many now members of Cho's church. They rejoiced...*in the hope of the glory of God (Romans 5:2b)!!*
THERE'S A GREAT GLORY COMING!!

But how do we make it through the grind of everyday life that exists between the beginning Grace and the ending Glory?

3. The Scripture-style Joy-life continues through the Knowledge of God (Romans 5:3-4).

When the tough times come we must rejoice in what we know.

...we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know... -Romans 5:3(NIV)

Even though we are going through financial difficulty, family difficulty, job difficulty, physical difficulty . . . we can still have joy ***because we know***. What do we know?

We need to know the basics. Not like Johnny when his Sunday school teacher asked him to list the 10 commandments. He said, "Sure... 8,5,3,1,7,10..." It is possible for us to know a great deal about some things and be dwarfed in our understanding of God's economy. Like the math teacher who quizzed one of her students. "What are 2 and 4 and 28 and 44?" He replied: "NBC, CBS, HBO, and Cartoon Network!"

We must be equipped with the knowledge of the purpose of suffering.

Our knowledge has '**POP**':

a) We know how God **PLANS** (Jeremiah 29:11).

'For I know the plans I have for you' declares the Lord. 'Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.'

Looking at the future can be a little depressing... You know, we are all dying. Like the little boy who watched with fascination as his mother smoother cold cream on her face. "What do you do that, Mommy?" "To make myself beautiful." After a few more moments she began to remove the cream with a tissue. The little boy asked, "What's the matter? Giving up?"

b) We know how God **OPERATES** (Romans 8:28).

And we KNOW that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

c) We know how God **PRODUCES** (Romans 5:3b-5a).

Paul tells us in this passage...

...we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character hope.

And hope does not disappoint us...-Romans 5:3b-5a (NIV)

Let's work this verse backwards...

WHY SO LITTLE HOPE? ...in our world today? Because of a lack of character.

WHY SO LITTLE CHARACTER? Because of a lack of perseverance. Our society quits when the going gets tough. When the marriage is tough; the job, the relationship, the church...

WHY SO LITTLE PERSEVERANCE? Because of our Tylenol-approach to suffering. We immediately try to *kill the pain!* So drugs persist; and alcohol abounds; and inconvenient children are aborted; and suicide is assisted.

WHY SO LITTLE SUFFERING? Because people don't *know* that this is how God produces joy deep down inside; joy that eventually will emerge in shouts and singing, it leaps and laughing; joy that only God can miraculously give.

4. The Scripture-style Joy-life is **POWERED** through the **SPIRIT** of God (Romans 5:5).

And hope does not disappoint us because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

-Romans 5:5

APPLICATION:

Have you received the Spirit since you believed (Acts 19:2)?