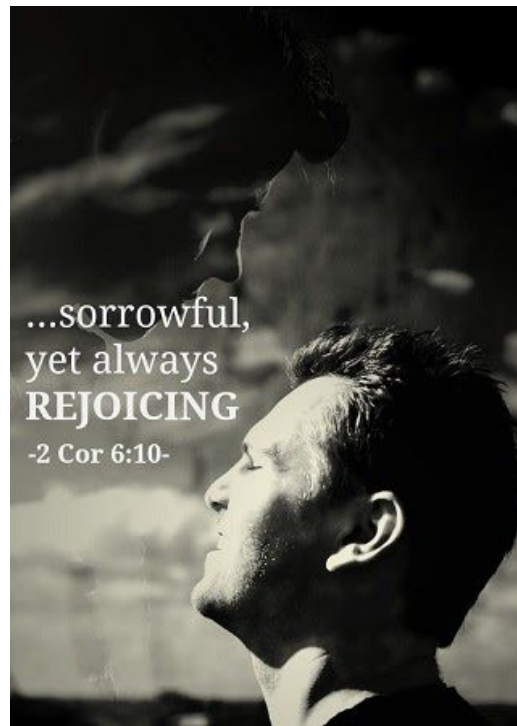


Maranatha Mirror Short

MYSTERIOUS PARADOX



*As unknown, and yet well known;
as dying, and behold we live;
as punished, and yet not killed;
as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing;
as poor, yet making many rich;
as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.*

II Corinthians 6:9-10

Every follower of Jesus is a paradox:

Crucified with Christ, yet *alive* with resurrection power.

Forgiven, yet *accountable* before God for every unforgiving word or deed.

God's strength made perfect in weakness.

Secure in God's love, yet baffled by God's ways.

But the most mysterious paradox of all is that we are...

Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing!

There are believers who seem to bubble over with joy day and night. Even at funerals they cannot contain their joy. They seem to know nothing of sorrow.

There are believers who never stop weeping---for themselves, for this tragic world, for the absurd injustice of human existence. They seem to know no joy.

Yet in Jesus we see *both* deep sorrow and unspeakable joy.

Deep sorrow.

And when he drew near and saw the city he wept over it, saying, "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes.

For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies will cast up a bank about you and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and dash you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another in you; because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Luke 19:41-44

Jesus wept for Jerusalem.

Before he raised Lazarus from the dead, Jesus wept.



“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

If we follow Jesus, we will know deep sorrow.

We will mourn for all the suffering that pervades this sad world, for our own failure to impart hope.

Unspeakable joy.

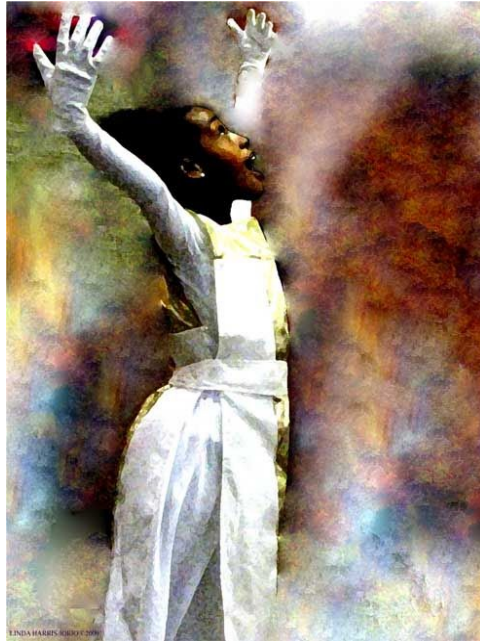
In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will."

Luke 10:21

Jesus not only rejoices, he gives joy to those who follow him.

“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

John 15:11



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If we abide in the Vine, we, like our Master will be....

Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing!

Prayer

Our dear Lord, thank you for your Living Word. Only you can take a paradox and make it into living truth, Alleluia. May we be crucified in you, yet thriving in life. May in our weakness we find your perfect strength. May we find your comfort as we mourn. And yes Jesus, may we experience unspeakable joy in the midst of deep sorrow. We seek you, we draw near to you, asking to live this beautiful, mysterious paradox.



THE LAMB
WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN

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