

JOY



This is Joy

Karen Harkema

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

John 15

Jesus never bubbled with happiness.

Why should he?

Who needs happiness, when you can have joy?

Jesus was sustained by joy.

All the sneers and nastiness hurled against him could not penetrate his joy.

It was always there.

It carried him all the way to the cross.

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

Jesus wanted his disciples to have joy.

He wants us to have it.

He prayed that we might have it.

“But now I am coming to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.”

John 17

So what is joy?

Joy comes from the world beyond.

Joy is a flame which no earthly wind can extinguish.

It warms the heart, when the world around us turns to ice.

It connects us with the heart of God.

It enables us to love our neighbor, our enemy, our persecutor.

The joy of the Lord is our strength.

His joy is our final guide through the door of death.

Joy knows that the Father has everything under control.

It gives thanks that God is on the throne.

It knows Jesus as its Lord and Friend.

It guards us in the Spirit, waking and sleeping.

Joy in the shadow of sorrow



Glory wrapped his Arms Around Her
Karen Harkema

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

In this world of sadness and suffering, how can we not mourn?

We see pain all around us and God's Spirit weeps within us.

Where we can, we help.

And how can we not mourn over our own failings.

Words we wish we had never spoken.

Things we should have done, and never did.

Lord, have mercy!

In this world the joy of the Lord is always paired with holy sorrow.

Yet always rejoicing

***As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich;
as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.***

II Corinthians 6

The joy of the Lord sanctifies our sorrows and overrides our regrets.

All we have to do is open our hearts to this gift from heaven, focus our minds on the Master, and rejoice in him as our Lord and Friend.

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I will say, rejoice!

Let all people know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand.

Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made know to God.

And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.



Be Still and Know

Karen Harkema

Philippians 4

Prayer- Lord Jesus our precious friend, how beautiful that you offer us the gift of joy. How wonderful that even in our sorrows, disappointments, fears, loneliness and shame over our own failures that we can still find joy. Thank you, thank you. Lord, we open our hearts to this precious gift. We lift our eyes to you and trust that you have everything under control. Oh Loving Father, connect us to your very heart where we can be loved, where we can find peace, where we can find the power to love others, where our hearts can be guarded against evil and where we find the only joy that can sustain us. MM

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