

Looking at the Heart, Test Yourself to See Your JOY

Sunday, April 17, 2011

Last week we looked at the significance, purpose and promise of examining ourselves and testing ourselves to see if we are in the faith. I had two purposes in these two weeks:

- 1 - To help you see that we should examine ourselves constantly
- 2 - Paint a picture of the JOY that comes through passing the test.

WHAT IS PASSING THE TEST?

Seeing that you are IN THE FAITH.
This means that CHRIST IS IN YOU
This shows that YOU ARE IN CHRIST

What circumstances warrant examination?

All of them.

When you DOUBT

When you SIN

When you are ANGRY

When you are DEPRESSED

When you are BITTER

When you are ALONE

When you are FEARFUL

When you are BORED

When you are DULL

When you are TIRED

When you are ENERGIZED

In the GLAD TIMES and GLOOM TIMES and GLORY TIMES and GOOFY TIMES

Examining our hearts will establish a continual reliance upon Christ and a continued expression of faith and an eternal understanding of God's grace.

--- excerpt but final portion of last week ---

JOY IN CHRIST - Joy is the ULTIMATE test. Do we have JOY in our pain, joy in our service, joy in our affections, joy in our struggles, joy during times of peace, joy in our depression, joy in our marriage - even when it stinks, joy with our kids when they drive us crazy? Joy when our health is good, joy when our neighbor wins, joy when our children live and joy when they are given unto death!?!

IF OUR JOY is set on ANYTHING but the PERSON of Christ, then we will not see it for very long, the measure of our FAITH is the EXTENT of our JOY in Christ! This reveals our FULL AFFECTION FOR HIM!!!! THIS IS THE FRUIT OF ALL FRUIT!

1 John 1:3-4 (ESV)

3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

John 15:11 (ESV)

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

Joy is a command. Not an option. It WILL be evident, if MUST be evident. God desires His children to HAVE THE FULNESS OF JOY in HIM ALONE! Because HE is what truly brings the satisfaction of the COSMOS!

2 Corinthians 13:4-6 (ESV)

4 For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.

5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

6 I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test.

Test ourselves for JOY. Why JOY????

COMMAND OF JOY, EXAMPLE of JOY and the ETERNITY of JOY

Rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice in ALL THINGS. The disciples returned with JOY. Apostles wrote of JOY. Jesus said that our JOY MAY BE FULL. Shout with JOY, Sing with JOY, be JOYFUL

Psalms are FULL of commands to REJOICE

Psalm 2:11

Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.

Psalm 5:11

But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them ever sing for joy,
and spread your protection over them,
that those who love your name may exult in you.

Psalm 9:14

that I may recount all your praises,
that in the gates of the daughter of Zion
I may rejoice in your salvation.

Psalm 13:5

But I have trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

Psalm 14:7

Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!
When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people,
let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Psalm 30:1

Joy Comes with the Morning
A Psalm of David. A song at the dedication of the temple.
I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up

and have not let my foes rejoice over me.

Psalm 31:7

I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love,
because you have seen my affliction;
you have known the distress of my soul,

Psalm 32:11

Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

Psalm 35:9

Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord,
exulting in his salvation.

Psalm 40:16

But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who love your salvation
say continually, "Great is the Lord!"

Psalm 48:11

Let Mount Zion be glad!
Let the daughters of Judah rejoice
because of your judgments!

Psalm 51:8

Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

Psalm 53:6

Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!
When God restores the fortunes of his people,
let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Psalm 58:10

The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance;
he will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked.

Psalm 63:11

But the king shall rejoice in God;
all who swear by him shall exult,
for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

Psalm 64:10

Let the righteous one rejoice in the Lord
and take refuge in him!
Let all the upright in heart exult!

Psalm 66:6

He turned the sea into dry land;
they passed through the river on foot.
There did we rejoice in him,

Psalm 70:4

May all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you!
May those who love your salvation
say evermore, "God is great!"

Psalm 85:6
Will you not revive us again,
that your people may rejoice in you?

Psalm 89:42
You have exalted the right hand of his foes;
you have made all his enemies rejoice.

Psalm 90:14
Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Psalm 96:11
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

Psalm 97:1
The Lord Reigns
The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice;
let the many coastlands be glad!

Psalm 97:8
Zion hears and is glad,
and the daughters of Judah rejoice,
because of your judgments, O Lord.

Psalm 97:12
Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous,
and give thanks to his holy name!

Psalm 104:31
May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works,

Psalm 104:34
May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the Lord.

Psalm 105:3
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!

Psalm 106:5
that I may look upon the prosperity of your chosen ones,
that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation,
that I may glory with your inheritance.

Psalm 118:24
This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 119:74
Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice,
because I have hoped in your word.

Psalm 119:162
I rejoice at your word
like one who finds great spoil.

Psalm 149:2
Let Israel be glad in his Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!

Revelation 19:6-7 (ESV)
6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.
7 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;

How do we examine?

"This is the part of the message that everyone has been waiting on. Honestly, this is the part where you have to truly fill in the blank. For each of us, our journey and our testing will be different.

Glean what you can, ask God to give you a direction that He desires in you but in closing, refer to the essence of testing. How does one even come to the point of being tested or examined?

THE WORD of the APOSTLES - so reading, praying and hearing scripture is the key to ongoing testing and examination. Which is the key to ongoing JOY"

Are WE LEARNING and in turn our lives are being transformed by the power of God's grace that comes ONLY through His word?

Are WE LIVING as the scriptures command through the power He provides?

Are WE LOVING as transformed people first Christ above all things then each other?

1 Peter 1:3-9 (ESV)
3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,
5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,
7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Look at this text!

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ- how do you know this?
THE WORD OF GOD!

God's word teaches you who He is and who Christ is and who YOU are in light of who He is... and then it gives a reflection of your heart, life, mind and deserved wage.

See the events here:

1. WORD OF GOD- Testing comes through our time in the word. God speaks through His word, His Son, the living word of God and the word is useful in our lives. (Heb 1; John 1; 2 Tim 3)
2. Through the WORD comes CONVICTION OF SIN because it gives a FRESH revelation and view of God's holiness.
3. Through this impossible task, we are TAKEN TO GOD'S MERCY and GRACE.
4. This GRACE reminds us of how we STAND before God JUSTIFIED through CHRIST ALONE BY FAITH ALONE. Rom 3:21---
5. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH restores an intimate and supernatural connection and affection for God, Christ, His Word, Prayer, Church etc. We place our MINDS on TRUTH, knowledge of Christ We place our SPIRIT on TRUTH, person of Christ. OBJECTIVE and SUBJECTIVE FAITH!

"IN this you NOW REJOICE!"

6. WORSHIP takes place in SPIRIT and TRUTH, then our hearts pound and pant for Christ!
7. HUNGER - This affection and worship leads us to LIVE and LEARN and LOVE even more and we devour the WORD as our TRUE BREAD.
8. The BREAD then empowers us to LOVE and LIVE with each other in celebration and peace as we work out our salvation and display the gospel through making of disciples, ministering to each other and MATURING into the head who is CHRIST!
9. We walk together in holy battle against SIN and at times we FAIL and WAIN in our worship...
10. TEST AGAIN... we remain DISCIPLINED in the WORD and in PRAYER and we seek for God to show us whose we really are!

TRUST (ING)
BELIEV (ING)
SERV (ING)
LOV (ING)
REPENT (ING)

Waiting for that day when we are FULL and COMPLETE with NO CONDEMNATION because CHRIST PAID IT ALL!

Let's look at this JOY!

8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him,
you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,
9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

You have not seen Jesus. However, His word reveals Him through the Spirit. No
other way, no other means, no other option.

You LOVE what you have not seen.

Remember John.

1 John 1:3-4 (ESV)

3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you
too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father
and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

You BELIEVE what you are not seeing.

You REJOICE in what you see that you cannot see!

Your JOY is INEXPRESSIBLE

Your JOY is filled with glory

Your JOY plants you deep in the GOSPEL as you REFLECT that you are truly a child
of GOD!

Closing, Heidelberg Catechism (1 & 32)

I belong to Jesus Christ in this life and in the life to come;
I dedicate my whole being to him as his faithful servant;
I present my heart to him promptly and sincerely;
I oppose sin and the works of the evil one;
I long to be eternally with Jesus.