

## Psalm 30 – Joy in all circumstances

A psalm. A song. For the dedication of the temple. Of David.

1 I will exalt you, LORD,  
for you lifted me out of the depths  
and did not let my enemies gloat over me.  
2 LORD my God, I called to you for help,  
and you healed me.  
3 You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead;  
you spared me from going down to the pit.  
4 Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people;  
praise his holy name.  
5 For his anger lasts only a moment,  
but his favor lasts a lifetime;  
weeping may stay for the night,  
but rejoicing comes in the morning.  
6 When I felt secure, I said,  
“I will never be shaken.”  
7 LORD, when you favored me,  
you made my royal mountain stand firm;  
but when you hid your face,  
I was dismayed.  
8 To you, LORD, I called;  
to the Lord I cried for mercy:  
9 “What is gained if I am silenced,  
if I go down to the pit?  
Will the dust praise you?  
Will it proclaim your faithfulness?  
10 Hear, LORD, and be merciful to me;  
LORD, be my help.”  
11 You turned my wailing into dancing;  
you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,  
12 that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.  
LORD my God, I will praise you forever.

### Introduction

One of the most thought-provoking scriptures in the new testament come with Philippians 4:4 where Paul gives the remarkable instruction to **Rejoice in The Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!** I have often thought about this – how is this possible to always rejoice when our lives can be so difficult? Today we argue, through experience and deep reflection, that rejoicing is actually a mental process which moves us from one negative or dull position to another place at the foot of the cross where we are overwhelmed with the utter joy of being saved and protected by our awesome father.

Rejoicing is a thought process that leads us out of a fleshy mind set or worldly mind set to a spiritual mind set. **Romans 8.<sup>5</sup> Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. <sup>6</sup> The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.**

Rejoicing is the process of setting on minds on what the Spirit desires – so what does the Spirit desire for us? In Romans 14:17 **it says that the Kingdom of God ... is peace and joy in The Holy Spirit.**

Psalm 30 -shows us how to rejoice. It unveils a useful thought process that we can practice and use to train ourselves to think biblical and be open to the Holy Spirits desire to give us joy.

### **Joy is the result of a distinct patterns of thought**

*It starts with a choice*

<sup>1</sup> I will exalt you, LORD,  
for you lifted me out of the depths  
and did not let my enemies gloat over me.

It starts as we saw last week with a determination to start, initiate, commence a rejoicing thought process by deciding to exalt God. In a way this is kick starting the transfer of our thought life from fleshy thinking to spiritual thinking. We see this in a number of psalms where the psalmist has to speak to himself – stirring his spirit into ascendancy. In Psalm 103 we have Praise the Lord oh my soul twice and a reminder not to forget all of Gods benefits. This is so important for us to grasp – we must shake ourselves out of despondency and fear and fatigue by thinking spiritually.

*It continues with a pattern of thinking that leads us to the foot of the cross*

We see in this psalm what we see in a number of psalms. The psalmist is really struggling but he says Hey! Snap out of this! Exalt God. And then he proceeds to use the simple but powerful set of thinking along the lines that God is great and because He loves me I am safe ... or God is X and because of this I am therefore Y.

He often repeats God did X in the past impacting me with Y – 2 *LORD my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me.*<sup>3</sup> *You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit.*

We can practise this by sitting down and writing out as many of these combinations (words and descriptions) as possible and then use them to create new neural pathways of thinking in our mind.

### **Joy comes from practising these patterns of thought**

What is our vocabulary like for describing and expressing the greatness of God and how this can comfort us? We can expand our vocabulary and create well-trod paths out of despair and despondency to the glorious freedom of Gods kingdom through prayer and praise.

*Prayer-* we see the psalmist talking to God in a free and wonderful way. Acknowledging His greatness and glory and also accepting and reminding himself of his security in that greatness. He even presents an argument to God. This links nicely with our passage in Philippians where Paul says Rejoice and then entreats us to present our prayers and petitions to God so we can exchange our troubled mind with a mind that is imbued with a great peace.

*Praise -*Sing the praises of the LROD, you his faithful people. What does this mean for us as we develop and practise our thought process of rejoicing ? Write out your descriptions and words in the formula of God X and therefore Y me and present them lovingly in your conversations with God. This will do you much good. This is real medicine for the heart.

### **Joy comes from being secure in who we are in Christ**

At some point in this process of rejoicing – you will come to a place of deep peace and security in who you are in Christ and all he has done for you.

*6 When I felt secure, I said, "I will never be shaken."*

We can use the illustration here of Theseus and the Minotaur. Our hero is plunged into a terrible labyrinth where a monster lurks. He has to kill the monster and find his way out. Fortunately, he is

given a cord to trace his steps in and out of the labyrinth. Well Jesus came into our labyrinth of darkness and killed the monster of death and slavery to sin. But our flesh and worldliness always leads our thinking down into this labyrinth and in can be hard to escape unless we pick up the cord of rejoicing and hand by hand , thought by thought be led in praise and prayer out of the darkness of our fleshy thinking into the wonderful light of Gods kingdom.

But we have to practise this in our thoughts. Each hand movement along the cord is a prayer, a praise and expression of the greatness of God. We have the advantage of being bale to replace God is X and therefore I am Y with Jesus died for me and therefore I am free. Jesus is the embodiment of Gods greatness and it is easier than you think to find words to express this.

### **Joy can be found in all circumstances**

Why am I so certain of this? I have in my life had terrible episodes of deep depression requiring some serious medication. During these episodes my wife was a constant source of comfort: she would constantly say it would all be ok, and encourage me to raise my thoughts to God. A dear sister shared recently how she suffered some great distress in her life , and phoned a friend who did exactly what my wife did for me: she was quickly reminded by her friend to say so what it will all be ok because God is greater than that situation.

Brother, sister the Holy Spirit is that friend in your life. He is always there to bring us to a place where we can put on joy out of a celebration of Gods greatness and our security within that greatness. The next time you come across a suffering brother or sister then please remind them of this and also Gods greatness.

Our psalm has two precious insights into the outcome of rejoicing:

- Rejoicing leads us to stand at the top of the **royal mountain** God planted our feet on when he rescued us
- God takes off our sackcloth and robes us with joy.

Rejoicing leads us to a place where we are firm and secure on our own royal mountain viewing the great glory of God, and His total love for us.

He will take off our sackcloth of painful anxious worry and put on us a robe of Joyful surrender to our security and peace with Him, through satisfying our desires with the desires of the Holy Sprit that we grow in the fruit of joy.