

The Key to a Joyful, Productive Life

TEXT: Romans 12:12

INTRODUCTION:

- A. SOME CHRISTIANS ARE UNHAPPY UNABLE TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS.
- B. SOME ARE HAPPY EVEN IN THE MOST SEVERE TRIALS.
- C. WHY THE DIFFERENCE?(**Rom. 12:12**).
- D. SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THIS VERSE.

I. THE JOYFUL LIFE IS BASED ON HOPE.

- A. MANY HAVE THE WRONG CONCEPT CONCERNING "JOY."
 - 1. That joy is a matter of temperament or a matter of circumstances.
 - 2. But how can that be when being joyful is enjoined upon us all?
 - a. It is a command, a duty(**1 Thess. 5:16; Phil. 4:4**).
 - b. Commanded even when things are rough(**1 Pet. 4:13**).
- B. TRUE JOY RISES ABOVE THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE.
 - 1. Seen in the example of the Hebrews(**Heb. 10:34**).
 - 2. Also in the example of Christians in Asia Minor(**1 Pet. 1:6**).
- C. THIS IS BECAUSE THE KEY TO JOY IS "HOPE"
 - 1. The hope of the Hebrews gave them joy despite suffering loss(**Heb. 10:34**).
 - 2. Christians' joy in Asia Minor was their hope of salvation(**1 Pet. 1:5-6**).
- D. TO BE JOYFUL IN LIFE, WE MUST HAVE HOPE!
 - 1. We have a living hope(**1 Pet. 1:3-4**).
 - 2. We hope because we believe(**2 Cor. 5:1-7**).
 - 3. Faith comes from God's promise(**Rom. 1:17; 2 Tim. 2:11-13**).
 - 4. **God's Word** produces faith necessary for hope (**Psa. 119:81; 114**).

II. A LIFE OF JOYFUL HOPE IS PATIENT IN TRIBULATIONS.

- A. FIRST, LET'S DEFINE OUR TERMS.
 - 1. "Patient" means more than simply enduring, forbearing.
 - 2. It also takes in the thought of activity despite the hardship.
 - 3. "Tribulations" trials suffered for the cause of Christ or those common to all.
 - 4. Paul is therefore talking about pressing on in doing good despite hardships.
- B. THE KEY TO SUCH PATIENCE IS "JOYFUL HOPE."
 - 1. This can be illustrated in several ways...
 - a. Why does the athlete endure the hardships of training?(**1 Cor. 9:25**).
 - b. The pilgrims endured the hardships of sailing across the ocean.
 - c. The college student endures the hardships of study and examinations?
 - d. EARLY CHRISTIANS endure persecutions, pressing on in their faithfulness to Christ? Why?(**Heb. 10:34**).
 - 2. Doesn't this explain why some do not remain steadfast when things get rough?

III. OUR LIVES WILL BE AS HOPEFUL, JOYFUL, AND PATIENT, AS THEY ARE PRAYERFUL.

- A. "CONTINUING STEADFASTLY IN PRAYER" IS ESSENTIAL!
 - 1. A relationship between prayer and the joy is implied(**1 Thess 5:16-18**).
 - 2. In prayer, we are constantly reminded of our HOPE

- a. The REASON for our hope (**1 Pet. 1:3; 2:24**)
 - b. The OBJECT of our hope (**Heb. 11:10**).)
- B. SO "PRAY WITHOUT CEASING!"(**1 Thess. 5:17**).

CONCLUSION:

- A. ARE OUR LIVES AS JOYFUL AND PRODUCTIVE AS THEY SHOULD BE?
- B. IF NOT, LET GOD'S WORD FILL UP OUR HEARTS AND PRAYER FILL UP OUR LIVES.
- C. THE RESULT WILL BE A PRODUCTIVE AND JOYFUL LIFE.