

August 1-5, 2016

Jessica VonCrist

Communications Coordinator/IT Specialist

Can joy co-exist with what is going on in our lives and around the world? By finding fulfillment in our positions as children of God and continually trusting and abiding in Him, we can find that spark of joy again. (Ps. 94:18-19; Hab. 3:17-18; Jn. 15:4-11)



5 MINUTES / 5 DAYS

MONDAY Joy in the Journey

Psalm 16:11

We left the driveway one winter morning several years ago, headed down the same road we drive everyday—still half asleep and not paying attention to much of anything—in somewhat of a daze. My daughter was nearly two years old—wide awake and holding her stuffed toy, giving it kisses. She was taking in the sights, as always, like she had never seen them before. “Ooooo, pretty. Ooooo, lights! Ooooo, snowman. Big truck! Grandma soon? Lights! ...careful, Daddy!” as he hit a small pothole.

I was immediately struck with this concept: she enjoys the journey as much as the destination. She was excited about where we were going, but she was still “all about the ride.” As adults, sometimes it’s easy to get wrapped up in the details of our future and to forget the blessings that are ours each and every day along the way.

***Thank God for His blessings, both big and small.
Decide to find the silver lining in circumstances.***

TUESDAY Joy in the Mundane

Psalm 118:23-24

Children are joyful over the simplest things. Sometimes their joy is contagious. Have you seen a child do something or laugh at something that caused you to laugh too? After describing the “Dee Dah Day dance” his young child does when she’s exceedingly happy, John Ortberg writes the following in his book, ***The Life You’ve Always Wanted***: ...*Life is a gift. We don’t earn it, can’t control it, can’t take a moment of it for granted. Every tick of the clock is a gift from God. Every day is a Dee Dah Day.*

We can choose joy each day. It doesn’t mean that we wear fake smiles and pretend like nothing’s ever hard or overwhelming; in fact, our circumstances may not change for a while. Choosing joy means that, in spite of everything, we choose to bask in God’s goodness and in the nature and character of who He is. He gave us this day, and He’s still on the throne. We know how it ends. It’s a Dee Dah day!

As we work to reflect God’s character, may we work to reflect His joy.

Glorifying God by producing more maturing followers of Jesus.

WEDNESDAY Joy in Belonging

Psalm 139:1-12; 17-18

Years ago, I came across Max Lucado’s book, ***God Thinks You’re Wonderful***. I have flipped through it quite a few times, amused by its elementary, yet profound content. The title of that book makes me smile.

We were created for community and belonging, and the desire for finding our niche and a sense of belonging never go away. But, in our loneliest of times we, as believers, know our names are written on the hand of the Creator of the universe! (Is. 49:16) No disappointment or failure can change that. We belong to Him, and He loves us beyond comprehension.

You were deliberately planned, specifically gifted, and lovingly positioned on this earth by the Master Craftsman. He thinks you are the best thing to come down the pike in quite a while. Turn to the sidelines; that’s God cheering your run. (Lucado)

Thank God for loving you more than you can imagine and for giving you a special place of belonging.

THURSDAY Joy in Uniqueness

Psalm 139:13-16; 1 Corinthians 12

Isn’t it mind-blowing to think that God created every single person completely different from one another? Yet, it’s so easy to spend time wanting what someone else has. Maybe it’s not even material. Maybe it’s a personality trait, physical appearance, family dynamic, job or income. Ironically, the more we lose sight of how God has uniquely made and gifted us, the more discontented we become, and our joy slips away. Psalm 139 says that we were intricately woven. We were designed as multi-faceted and complex individuals. We are called His “*masterpieces*,” “*the work of His hands*,” and “*miraculously made*.” Our unique qualities not only make life more “colorful,” but they also allow us to fulfill the purpose God has for each of us as we work together in life and service.

Take joy in your unique personality and gifts, and remember that you are God’s masterpiece!

FRIDAY Joy in Salvation

Psalm 51:8-12

Recently, I was looking for something I had misplaced. I didn’t find it, but I came across something else that someone had given me years ago. I had put it in that “safe place” and forgot about it completely. When I found it, I remembered who gave it to me, what we talked about, and the emotions attached to the experience.

Sometimes, the longer we have something, the easier it is to forget its significance. This can be true of our salvation. We can get comfortable and sometimes even complacent about it. Yet, what Jesus has done for us is the very reason we can choose joy despite circumstances. It’s the reason we can rest and trust in Him when things seem impossible. Salvation is what makes His grace so very real to us and allows His joy to radiate from us.

Ask God to restore to you the joy of your salvation and that it would shine through you.