

Psalm 126 Joy-filled Restoration

"Psalm 126 comes from a people living between the times, between a good time remembered and another good time hoped for." -James Limburg

Vs 1-3 — The Celebration of Remembrance

Vs 1 — Dream-like restoration

Vs 2 — Overflowing emotion

"Joy is a characteristic of Christian pilgrimage." Eugene Peterson

Vs 3 — This restoration produced joy and gladness.

"We are glad." This is a peaceful declaration, not hyped-enthusiasm.

Remember:

1. The joy of your salvation
2. The joy of victory, freedom, and life-change. "I once was _____, but now I'm _____"
3. The joy of Christian brothers and sisters, the Church.
4. The joy of serving God.

How has God been wonderful to you? How has he been good to your family/community? How has God been good to Second Mile?

Sometimes our bodies are a first indication for what is going on in our hearts: What happens in your body when you remember these joy-giving things? Do your shoulders relax, a nice exhale, do you smile? Do you feel peaceful and glad? Relax your shoulders, open your hands and say, "The Lord has done great things for us; we are joyful/glad."

Nostalgia ≠ Remembrance

"Don't say, "Why were the former days better than these?" since it is not wise of you to ask this."
Ecclesiastes 7:10

Every generation has its trouble and every generation experiences the movement of God. We look to the great things God has done to enable us to patiently and eagerly await Jesus's return.

Vs 4 — The Reality of Need

What are your fears? Name them. Write them down. Look back in years to come and remember God's faithfulness.

Ask God to restore you, fill you with trust, to enable you to not be in fear or dread of the future.

Restore us, O God.

Vs 5-6 — The Promise of Harvest

These verses show the cycle of sadness and joy.

Vs 5 and 6 use the strong confident language "will reap" and "will surely come back with shouts of joy."

Vs 5-6 Sow your tears; don't waste your sorrow.

If you have a bag of seed that you know will produce a good product, you don't eat it, you don't toss it, you don't lose it. You plant it.

Grieve in a way that produces the fruit of joy.

We must remember that weeping is a human experience. Everyone endures sorrow.

How do we sow sorrow?

1. Look and cling to Jesus. He is our ultimate example of joy in the midst of sorrow. He wept when he looked at the helpless crowds. He endured the humiliation of the time leading up to the cross. He laid his life down through death on a cross.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. 2Corinthians 4:16-18 (NIV)

2. Lament in prayer.

"Lament in the Bible is a liturgical response {or an ordered response} to the reality of suffering and it engages God in the context of pain and trouble. The hope of lament is that God would respond to the human suffering that is wholeheartedly communicated through lament." -Soong Chan Rah

3. Do not suffer in repression, guilt, self-pity, or anger. Read Romans 8, Psalm 27 or 139 everyday if necessary.
4. Do not sit in your sorrow alone.

We are meant to carry one another's burdens. You are meant to carry and to be carried. When joy comes, you have people to rejoice with! Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Sow your tears, you will surely come back with shouts of joy.

Are you in between remembering what God did for you and hoping he will do it again? What do you do with your sorrow? How would you explain to someone what it means to sow your tears?

Do you want a harvest of joy? Name three things that bring you joy. Make a plan to read your Bible at least three times this week. Make a plan to engage in at least one joy-producing activity this week. Follow through with these plans.