

Lost and Found

Smile

Jam. 1:19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ²⁰for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Eph. 4:22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. ²⁵Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷and do not give the devil a foothold...²⁹Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you...^{5:1}Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ²and live a life of love...

Gal. 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. ²⁵Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

When I made the decision to follow Jesus, my nature was changed!

Joy is not optional; it is a command.

Phil. 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

Joy is not circumstance based.

1 Thess. 5:16 Be joyful always; ¹⁷pray continually; ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Joy comes from knowing I am not alone.

Is. 43:1-3 Don't be afraid, I've redeemed you. I've called your name. You're mine. When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you. When you're in rough waters, you will not go down. When you're between a rock and a hard place, it won't be a dead end - Because I am God, your personal God, The Holy of Israel, your Savior. (The Message)

Psm. 5:11 But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. For surely O Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

Joy comes from knowing God will use my circumstances for His glory!

Heb. 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Joy comes from an eternal perspective.

The key to being joyful: Focus on Jesus!

1 Pet. 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Pet. 1:8 ...ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Psalm 42:2-5 I'm on a diet of tears—tears for breakfast, tears for supper. All day long people knock at my door, Pestering, "Where is this God of yours?" These are the things I go over and over, emptying out the pockets of my life. I was always at the head of the worshiping crowd, right out in front, Leading them all, eager to arrive and worship, Shouting praises, singing thanksgiving—celebrating, all of us, God's feast! Why are you down in the dumps, dear soul? Why are you crying the blues? Fix my eyes on God—soon I'll be praising again. He puts a smile on my face. He's my God.

⁹⁻¹¹ Sometimes I ask God, my rock-solid God, "Why did you let me down? Why am I walking around in tears, harassed by enemies?" They're out for the kill, these tormentors with their obscenities, Taunting day after day, "Where is this God of yours?" Why are you down in the dumps, dear soul? Why are you crying the blues? Fix my eyes on God—soon I'll be praising again. He puts a smile on my face. He's my God. ^{43:1-5} Clear my name, God; stick up for me against these loveless, immoral people. Get me out of here, away from these lying degenerates. I counted on you, God. Why did you walk out on me? Why am I pacing the floor, wringing my hands over these outrageous people? Give me your lantern and compass, give me a map, So I can find my way to the sacred mountain, to the place of your presence, To enter the place of worship, meet my exuberant God, Sing my thanks with a harp, magnificent God, my God. Why are you down in the dumps, dear soul? Why are you crying the blues? Fix my eyes on God—soon I'll be praising again. He puts a smile on my face. He's my God. (The Message)

Joy is a decision.

Phil. 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again; Rejoice. Let your

gentleness be evident to all.