

Heaven's Back Door Blessings

Introduction: They are a universal longing of the human spirit. We spend many hours reading about them, searching to find them, and much money is spent in an attempt to buy them. What is it? Experiencing joy and peace. Joy! Oh the bliss, oh the gladness. Peace! Oh the calmness, oh the settledness. Who doesn't want joy and peace? We all want joy and peace.

I) Definitions

Joy - is sublime happiness; great pleasure and satisfaction. It can range all the way from a moment brief moment of sheer ecstasy, to a transcending feeling of gratification that lasts and lasts and lasts.

Peace - is quietness of spirit; tranquility, serenity. And like joy, it can range from a moment of calmness, to a perpetual freedom from inner turmoil.

Now, here is where it begins to get very interesting. These lovely pair of inner emotions and spiritual experiences are presented in Scriptures in their ultimate, fullest sense, as products of a God directed life. They are both part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit directed life. Galatians 5 says so. Someone has said they are back-door blessings, and by that is meant, that while we are looking out the front door and heading in God's direction, these two gems come into our lives through the back door, maybe almost imperceptibly, at least at first.

And let me say something right at this juncture...when I say joy and peace are backdoor blessings, I am not saying they cannot be pursued, sought, and desired. Of course not. The Bible says in Hebrews 12:14...*Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.* — And the same goes

for joy...Ecclesiastes 8:15...*And I commend joy, for man has no good thing under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him under the sun.* — **Strive** for peace...and **be** joyful. I suggest we have to be inclined in this direction or it will not happen...and what's more, we are not pleasing the Lord if we are not wishing and willing this to happen within us...but I still say that it is more to be experienced by walking in the ways of the Lord and just letting them come in the back-door. And here is one reason I think this to be so...

II) They Are Indescribable

Both are better felt, or experienced, than told, or described. By the way, this is not true of salvation. Whether you are saved or lost the bible does not present as better felt than told. True, the saving grace of God is far above my thoughts and feelings, but I am told in Scripture that it can be known. I am to know I'm saved, not just feel I'm saved. — But, back to joy and peace...these beautiful blessings ARE better felt or experienced than told or described...because the bible says so.

I Peter 1:8 - *Whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you **rejoice with joy inexpressible** and full of glory.*

Philippians 4:7 - *And the peace of God, **which surpasses all understanding**, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

If you can describe it, you probably are not experiencing it...at least not fully. Oh, you may be tasting it, but the Word of God states plainly they go past mortal comprehension skills. And no I don't mean just mine and Paul Gitter's...but everyone...Solomon included. And speaking of Solomon, might I add at no extra charge (this is a freebie) Solomon in Ecclesiastes, as brilliantly wise and astute a man as he was, gifted that way by God Himself, says frustratingly and with resignation...I

just can't figure this life out...I am so left wondering about so much after I labor to find out day and night. So joy and peace aren't the only indescribable things. But, they most certainly are in the exclusive category.

III) Possible Mistakes We Make

Why don't we have these two wondrous qualities of our soul? Well, maybe we are seeking both in the wrong places. Remember that country song years ago, looking for love in all the wrong places. Well, here is another verse...looking for joy and peace in all the wrong places. Like where? Like possessions, recreation, entertainment, hobbies, jobs, sex, drugs and alcohol, etc. Now, I am not saying that these can't touch on the desired outcome, that's probably why we try it, but it just isn't ultimately there to be found. More on this in a minute.

It might be that we are seeking them in non-enduring places. All of life is temporary, but there are some aspects of life that are **really** temporary...i mean temporary times 10. Popularity is so fleeting. But, we often try to find joy and peace in getting all to speak well of us..to have a ton of friends. And then, it can be gone. — It can be through good health...but then cancer crops up...or we just get old. — Or even family...sad but so true, family is transient and if all our aspirations of joy and peace if they are bound in that...we may find ourselves sorely disappointed. All this can result in continual searching, running to "greener pastures", etc.

And one more...we settle for "watered down" varieties. Here is how Jesus saw it ... *Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.* - John 14:27. So you see there are worldly varieties, but that is not of the best enduring quality kind.

IV) Back Door Blessings

As previously noted, joy and peace are products of a Spirit-filled life - Galatians 5:22. These, as well as the other items of that precious fruit, are going to spring forth, when the Spirit of God is made to be the tree of your life. Then, the fruit will be borne and joy and peace are some of that fruit. Let me analyze a bit closer what I mean and what this entails...this idea that joy and peace are by-products.

Romans 8:1-2;6...*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. - To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.* — True forgiveness in Christ Jesus and a clear conscience produces life and peace. No condemnation or guilt hanging over us daily, does wonders for our peace experience. Wonders for it.

Acts 2:46-47...*And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.* — Christian fellowship has a way of producing gladness. May I boldly say, you want peace and joy? Then go to church as much as you humanly can and get with the Christin brothers and sisters throughout the week, or at least stay in touch with those of like precious faith. And what can come walking though the back door as you set your mind to do this? You got it. Joy and peace.

III John 3,4...*For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.* — Influencing others towards the truth, staying in tune with what others are doing in the truth, produces joy...great joy... joy inexpressible and full of glory.

And there are others, but hopefully these few get you going in the direction of which I am thinking. Pleasing the Heavenly Father in whatever way He wills of us brings joy and peace that surpasses human comprehension.

God desires we go forth in life with joy and peace (Isaiah 55:12)...*"For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.* — This is more than what we want...it is what God wants. Wants for us. For us His children.

Romans 14:17 says...*For the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.* — Do not settle for a physical oriented religion that does not have joy and peace, along with righteousness as a central part of it.

Conclusion: *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. (Rom. 15:13).*
Amen.