

## Unexpected Joy When Times are Hard

When we are at the end of our strength, it is truly a surprise to discover our God to be right there. Yet, He is. Do you know such joy? Do you know what to do with your joy?

Scripture(s): 2 Kings 7:3-20

Remember this - Joy received from Jesus is joy that should be \_\_\_\_\_ with the joyless.

Observations of this passage:

1. Fatalism was a strong justification for both the \_\_\_\_\_ and the servants of the king to go into the Aramean camp.
  2. Everyone fears someone and the Lord used the Aramean's own fears to \_\_\_\_\_ them.
  3. The lepers feared the punishment of \_\_\_\_\_ if they left the city frightened while they were blessed.
  4. The king believed a \_\_\_\_\_ plan, and not a miraculous rescue, was what was occurring.
  5. The people rushed the gate so forcefully that the king's servant was crushed under the \_\_\_\_\_.
  6. Every part of Elisha's prophecy happened just as he \_\_\_\_\_.
- I. A first experience of God giving us unexpected joy comes when we have come to the end of our \_\_\_\_\_. When our \_\_\_\_\_ hope is gone, the hope that God gives through Jesus surprises us.

Romans 5:3-5 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

II. A second experience of God giving us unexpected joy comes when we \_\_\_\_\_ our unexpected joy with others who are at the end of their resources. God uses \_\_\_\_\_ testimony of Christ to transform the lives of others.

Acts 16:25-33 5 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; 26 and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. 27 When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" 29 And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. 33 And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household.

III. A third experience of God giving us unexpected joy comes as we see God do exactly what He has \_\_\_\_\_ He would do. The joy that comes from \_\_\_\_\_ is the joy of kept promises! Our challenge - If we have experienced the joy of the Lord, we should share Him with those who have \_\_\_\_\_.

Consider these questions with God:

1. Have I come to the end of myself and are ready to turn to Him?
2. Have I discovered Your joy, Lord, and now know it would be wrong to withhold that joy from others?
3. Do I let things steal my joy because I depend on myself rather than You?

June 16, 2024

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