

Giving God's Way, pt.3, 2.15.09  
Joy Filled Giving

Intro.

1. Review

- a. Giving God's Way, pt.1 – Firstfruits: The Action & Attitude God Desires. Abel gave the first & the best; “only the best will do.”
- b. Giving God's Way, pt.2 – A Willing Heart. 1 Chron.29. The Perspectives Needed
- c. Giving God's Way, pt.3 – A Joy Filled Giver

2. Video – Cheerful Giver?

3. Text – 1 Chron.29.9 & 2 Cor.9.1–8

Cheerful & joyful giving

2 Cor.9.8 – “Cheerful” – transliteration is “hilarious”. It’s the idea of giving w/o grudging, a willing, gracious & overflowing attitude. It is something you really want to do. In my mind, it goes back to the attitude of Abel. He really wanted to give (willingness) and joyfully anticipated giving God his best.

I am drawing a distinction between willing giving & joyful giving. A Willing giver is one who wants to give, whereas a joyful giver is one who really looks forward and is emotionally charged about giving. I believe it’s one step beyond a willing giver. It’s the attitude exhibited in 1 Chron.29. They were not only willing to give, but they were excited about giving.

Scriptural Examples of Joy

- Luke 10.17–21 – They are excited because they experienced the power of God as they were giving the Kingdom to others. Jesus is excited in the HS b/c His disciples are walking in their inheritance. They are doing the things and trusting in the truths he taught them. He tells them that really should excite is not the power of God, but their relationship with God. In other words, it’s not what

God has given you, but that you are known by God. It was an expressive gladness.

- Acts 4.32–35: Though joy isn't mentioned, it is clear they are joyful. They took care of each other and God's favor was upon them.
- Acts 8.5–8: The activity of God was manifest and the people greatly rejoiced.
- Acts 13.50–52: They were joyful even after rejection.
- Acts 15.1–3: Everyone was excited about God's activity among the Gentiles.

Definition of Joy – expressive gladness. Joy is more than peace and contentedness. It is emotional and demonstrative. It's an internal activity of the HS that is often birthed out of our being in a visible demonstration. Whenever joy is mentioned in the Bible in the context of an event it is always expressive and heart felt. It is an abiding happiness that rests in the spirit of the believer. It will be manifested differently in each person's life. Happiness is based on a happening. The happening is that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, rose from the grave to give us life, imparted to us the Holy Spirit, made us heirs to his throne and gave us dominion in this life! We ought to be happy!

The Source of Joy –

- Gal.5.22. It is a fruit of the Spirit! It is a clear sign of the activity of God in your life.
- The Father is full of joy – Neh.8.9–12. The people were mourning and Neh sensed this should be a time of rejoicing. He said the Lord would give them strength during this time with His joy;
- What practically stirs joy (expressive gladness) in my life is the presence of God. Ps.16.11 – As I draw into God's presence, the Spirit of God inside of me begins to stir and the closer I get the more I experience His joy. It's like two magnets being drawn together. The closer they get the stronger the attraction. The closer I get the more expressive it. If you want to be a joyful giver, you

draw near to the Joyful Giver. Conversely, what facilitates apathy & depression is being out of His presence.

- This is from Sam Storm's book, "The Singing God", ch.2. Zeph.3.17 is how God feels about you now & forever. When you experience joy, you are experiencing God's excessive gladness over you. You are feeling what He feels towards you. God is exceedingly joyful over you.
  - Sam Storm's paraphrase of this verse: The Lord your God is with you all the time. He is a powerful and mighty warrior who saves you. When He thinks of you He exults in festive pleasure and with great delight. At other times he becomes quiet as He reflects upon His deep affection for you. He celebrates you with joyful singing.
    - The Lord your God is with you all the time. In 3.14–16, it indicates that God's presence had not been around them due to their behavior. He now states that His presence is always with them. Due to this radical change of God's position among them, he tells them to rejoice and cheer up. He's telling us, "Shout it out! God is now living among you."
    - He is a powerful and mighty warrior who saves you. He is a great soldier who guards us and leads us into victory.
    - When he thinks of you He exults in festive pleasure and with great delight. When God thinks about you it explodes in festive celebration.
      - Matt.25.21 – Par of the Money. "Well done good & faithful servant. B/c you have been faithful with a few things I'll put you in charge of much more. Enter into the joy of your master." Christians who have near death experiences often talk about the incredible love & joy they felt in God's presence.
      - John 15.11 – Js desire is for the joy of His own life to become our joy. We are to experience more than just joy in God or the joy He gives,

but we are to experience the joy that God himself enjoys.

- “Exults over you in festive pleasure...” It’s the same language used in v.14 to describe our rejoicing over God. We are exhorted to sing just as He is singing over us. We know what it’s like to get excited about God (Is.61.10), but God gets excited about us (Is.62.4,5). When God thinks about you His heart bursts forth in song. There is divine glee and expressive gladness in God’s heart about you.
- The same terms that are used to describe God’s joy over us are used elsewhere to describe dancing, singing, shouting, mirth, elation and merriment. This is how he feels about us.
- At other times he becomes quiet as He reflects upon His deep affection for you.
  - Words become inadequate for God as He reflects upon His love for us. Haven’t you felt that for a spouse or child or grandchildren? You can’t express it with words. You just want to hold the person and hope that what is in your heart towards him is somehow imparted into his heart.
  - Palmer Robertson, “To consider almighty God sinking in contemplations of love over a once-wretched human being can hardly be absorbed by the human mind.”
- “He celebrates you with joyful singing” – You may resist and balk at this due to issues in your life, past problems and sin strongholds, etc. But in Zeph.3.15, he states he has taken away His judgments from you. He doesn’t overlook our sin, but His grace is greater than your sins. He doesn’t deal with you according to your sins, but according to his grace. Ps.103.8–14.

- His love for us is as high as the heavens are above the earth. Pretend there is a wall of water from earth to the moon and your standing in front of that wall. How tall are you compared to the wave? You're nothing. Your sin is nothing compared to his love for you. Besides that, he's already taken that sin away. You need only sit back and be immersed in the wave of His love.

- and we miss it for 're rewarded for doing goodTimes of feeling real joy being around others, there is exceeding joy thatPs.16.11 –

Demonstrated – through giving, shouting, singing, dancing, crying, praising, bowing, smiling, hope in your heart, etc. as you draw into His presence and reflect upon the goodness and love of God. It is action oriented. You have to do something. You are moved by the activity of the Spirit as you reflect upon the goodness of God in your life. You become a joyful giver when you get close to the Joyful Giver. His joy for Himself and you becomes your joy. His joy for giving becomes your joy for giving.

One morning at breakfast, I decided to teach my nearly four-year-old Caleb his first Bible verse--(John 3:16). I slowly enunciated the words: "For God so loved the world he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

The second time I said the verse even slower, encouraging Caleb to fill in certain words. When I got to "... shall not perish but have everlasting [blank]," Caleb proudly answered, "fun!" I couldn't have said it better myself.

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