

# Restoration of Joy

by Bill McLeod

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking joy in God as our strength, power, and necessary for persuading others to receive the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 55:36

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:1-4, Psalm 51:7, Psalm 51:10-13

**Topics:** "Joy"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a man who had a chance to share the gospel with his friends but didn't take it. Later, his best friend from that group was shot to death in a card game. The man is filled with regret and asks the preacher if there is any way he can apologize to his friend for not telling him about Jesus. The preacher tells him that there isn't a way to do that, but he can learn from the situation. The preacher then shares a story about an evangelist who experienced a dry spell in his ministry and realized that the lack of blessings was due to his own lack of love and joy in Christ. The evangelist learned that if he focused on cultivating the love and joy of Christ in the few people he had, the blessings would overflow and impact others. The sermon emphasizes the importance of personal restoration and the transformative power of God's love and joy in our lives.

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## Transcript

You know, the Saints of God are very special people. I don't know if you feel that way, but they are. Even sometimes when they're cranky and crusty, they're God's children, they're special people.

Many years ago I heard Dr. Shields preach just once, the only time I ever did hear him, and he was telling us about a man he had in his church who was creating problems. Every time they had a business meeting, this fellow was on his seat objecting. No matter what the item of business was, I object, I object, I object.

Well, they'd talk with him, have meetings with him, and he would promise he wouldn't do it again, and it would last about two months, and then he'd be in a business meeting and do it again. And finally they got him to hold off for about three months, and then one night in the business meeting he got to his feet and he was opposing everything. I object, I object, I object.

Well, Dr. Shields got a hold of him after the meeting and said, I'd like to have some words with you in the office. So they got in the office and he said, Dr. Shields, you must think I'm a terrible person. He said, I'm not really.

He said, I don't know even why I did it tonight. He said, something just took a hold of me and I knew I shouldn't, but I did it. He said, Dr. Shields, you know, I'm really pure gold at heart.

Well, he said, you might be, but you're the roughest nugget I ever knew. But God's children are special people, and sometimes we make the mistake, well, I could illustrate this by another story that you may have heard, apparently a true story, a Christian worker was preaching in a church and he was invited to a certain home for dinner, and the pastor sort of warned him, he said, now these people you're going to have dinner with, they're Christians, but they're very, very critical people, so be very careful what you say. And so, sure enough, he's at the dinner table and somebody begins to criticize some Christian worker, and somebody criticizes someone else, and someone criticizes someone else, and he just kept on eating, paid no attention.

They were trying to bait him, to trap him, so finally somebody said something about a certain Christian worker and turned to this man and said, and what do you think about it? Well, he said, I'll tell you what I think about it, I read in the Bible that the devil is the accuser of the brethren, and I don't like doing his dirty work. So the temperature went down to about 30 degrees below, and I guess he wasn't invited back home again. You know, praying Hyde, this was an insight God gave me when I was a very young Christian through a book by praying Hyde, and he was telling how one of the missionaries in their area had become backslidden, very cold, and was a reproach among the unbelievers, and he was praying about this man one day, and he was praying, God, strike him down, God, do this, God, do that.

The Bible says we're to lift up holy hands when we pray without wrath and doubting. And he said, the Lord came to him and said, touch him not, he's the apple of my eye. And he actually opened his eyes to look around to see who said that, because it was so real.

Well, he went to praying again and heard the same voice, touch him not, he's the apple of my eye. So then, Hyde said, I got the message from God, and I began to pray for God to revive the heart of that Christian. And that Christian, that backslidden missionary, experienced a profound revival, and was mightily used of God.

You know something? If we would pray for God's people as much as we criticize them, we'd have a revival all over the place. Well, just a few thoughts. They're not even by way of introduction.

Neil asked me to say a little bit about the book *Demonism Among Evangelicals and the Way to Victory*. It's a little book I wrote some years ago. And I can't sell books the way that these other brethren sell them.

You know, they throw them around, and they seem to float through the air to the right person, and all that sort of thing. You maybe weren't here to see that, but it's quite a thing. I'm a conservative scotchman.

I don't know how they do it. But anyway, I didn't even know these books were coming, but they did come apparently today. They're \$2 a copy if you're interested in having one.

You might feel it's kind of a small book for \$2. Well, what we did, we used a very readable print, but it's not as large as the print in some books. And I saw a book one time almost double the size of this book.

It had 36,000 words. This one has 53,000 words. So you get your money's worth as far as that's concerned.

But if you're interested at all, it's not dealing with the spectacular elements, and certainly nothing far out. But I was shocked after I got into revival work to discover how often Christian people were involved in occult practices sometimes without even knowing it. I was in Minneapolis and preached there, and after the regular meeting, I brought a lecture in the occult, about 400 people in the meeting.

I gave an invitation for anybody who was involved in the occult to come forward, and about 40 people responded, all of them professing Christians. Well, I thought that's Minneapolis. They call it the Witchcraft Center of America.

There's 150 witches coven, 13 witches in the coven in Minneapolis. Well, I can expect that. But the same thing exactly happened in Sault Ste.

Marie in Canada. About 300 people stayed for the lecture in the occult, 35 or 40 came forward for counseling, all of them Christians. What do you do in a case like that? What do you do? And I've talked with Christian people, I mean people who gave every evidence of being born again that were involved in as many as 22 separate areas of the occult.

So it's a problem, a serious problem. And it's one of the reasons why I wrote the book. One is a complete glossary of biblical terms, plus we try to get a sort of cross-section of cases we've come up against, and you might find some insights here.

A couple of people have asked if I'll be talking on this while I'm here, and if God so leads, I'll be very happy to do it. And you might pray that God would lead each of us as we speak, that we might be clear in our minds as to what God would have us to say. You know, there's sermons and there's sermons, but we want to be like Haggai, who was called the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message.

So we want to be that, the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message to our brethren. Psalm 51, if you want to turn there, I'm sure that most of us will remember that this is David's prayer of repentance after he had backslidden. We're going to read the first 13 verses of the chapter.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your loving kindness, according unto the multitude of your tender mercies. Blot out my transgressions. Wash me truly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight that you might be justified when you speak and be clear when you judge. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold, you desire truth in the inward parts and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Where I take a text, I would take the 12th verse. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. Perhaps call the message the restoration of joy.

There's a book out of print now. It's called Bringing in the Sheaves by a famous American evangelist called J.B. Earle. I wish the book was in print today.

It's not too long ago that I read it. And in that book there was a sermon called The Restoration of Joy. Now I'm not preaching that sermon today at all, but I did gain some helpful insights from it.

Mr. Earle tells how that he'd been an evangelist for some years and there had been a measure of blessing in his work. And then the blessing seemed to be drying up and he didn't know why. He was going to a certain place to preach, so he said, I've prepared five of the hardest, harshest sermons I could conceive.

Barbed wire and cactus and everything. And he preached one and nothing happened. He preached two, nothing happened.

Preached three, nothing happened. Preached four, nothing happened. He only had one left.

So he said, I took that fifth sermon and I reworked it and I pounded those people. I beat them. I did everything.

And nothing happened. So that night he got alone with God. He asked God why he wasn't blessing.

The Lord said, It's because of you. Because of me. It's the people.

No, it's not the people. It's you. Well, God, how can it be me? I'm the evangelist.

It's you. Lord, it can't be me, he said. It kept on like this.

He was trying to persuade the Lord it wasn't him, it was the people. So he said, Well, Lord, you know that I cry sometimes when I preach. The Lord said, Yes, but that's just water off an iceberg.

Water off an iceberg. And then he saw it and he was on his face before God until two o'clock in the morning. And he said, At two o'clock in the morning, God restored the love of Christ in his soul.

You know, here's something he said. He said, If I started with 17 people, and he did one time, and I was in a building seating 2,000 and I wanted to fill that building, I would work until those 17 people had the fullness of Christ's joy in their life and then the building would fill. And he saw it happen.

He saw it happen time and time again. God's people filled with the love of God, the joy of God, and the sinners can't resist this. And he gives many wonderful examples of people whose homes were transformed, of churches that were transformed as a result of the restoration of the joy of God lost through sin.

So the prayer is, Restore unto me. It's a personal prayer, isn't it? He's not praying for his family or a church or something or the nation. He's praying for himself.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. Now, I think there's a difference, a discernible difference between joy and happiness. At least I make a difference.

And I would say that happiness is something that's linked to happenings, whereas joy is linked to God and my relationship to him. I may not always be happy, but I can always be joyful. Maybe the difference I'm making is not valid.

I'm not really sure. But I think there is this kind of a difference. For example, if you get a raise in pay or a bonus or something, you go to your home, you tell your wife, you tell your husband, whatever, look, I got \$300 of bonus.

I wasn't expecting it at all. And boy, ever happy. But you know, a week later, it's old stuff.

You spent it by then probably. Or a new car, new fridge, new this, new that. Or you get a good doctor's report where you're expecting a bad doctor's report.

And boy, you're just flying. It's fantastic. You're so happy about that.

But you know, a week later, it's pretty hard to be happy about it then because it's sort of, it's got dim. Or maybe you get a letter, a phone call, a good friend's coming to stay for a weekend. And you're just so happy to think you haven't seen them for three years.

You're going to have a great time. But you know, after they're gone, you don't have that same joy in your heart, that same happiness. And so I say that happiness is dependent to a large extent on happenings.

But joy depends on something else. It depends on my personal relationship with the Lord. Now, George Mueller was one of the greatest men of faith in the history of the Christian church.

So I'm going to embarrass you. I'm going to ask you this question. How many of you people have read his life story? Would you raise your hand? At the most, not quite ten, I guess.

And that's sad. I asked that of a seminary class a few months ago. And out of 45 in the class, were there six that had read the story of George Mueller? I asked that in a Bible school where 75 kids, two kids had read the story of George Mueller.

People, listen. It's one of the most thrilling, challenging stories in the history of the church of God. George Mueller.

And here's something he said. One of the things he said that's very helpful. He said, What is a Christian's chief duty every day? Now, I want you to answer that in your own heart.

What is a Christian's chief duty every day? What do you think? Do you know what he said? Be prepared for a shock. He said, A Christian's chief duty every day is to be joyful in his God. Why? Because the joy of the Lord is your strength.

That's your power. And there isn't one book in a hundred written on this matter of the power of the Holy Spirit that deals with this. The joy of the Lord is my strength.

That's my power. And sometimes I'm seeking for power in the wrong way. Nehemiah 8.10. Let's start there.

The joy of the Lord is your strength. And you and I can't be strong to resist temptation and sin, nor can we be strong to share Jesus Christ with other people if we don't have the joy of God in our soul. And David

knew that.

He lost the ability to win sinners to God. He said, Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee. He knew that when he had that joy back in his soul, then God could use him.

He would have power. He would have strength. But it was gone.

Oh, it was gone. And you can't understand Psalm 51 unless you understand Psalm 32, because in Psalm 32 he tells us what happened. When I kept silence, he wouldn't confess his sin.

And this went on for possibly a year because a child was born. We don't know how old it was, maybe some weeks, possibly some months, or maybe even one. We don't really know.

But he kept silence over his sin all this time. Somehow he managed to. But day and night, he said, God's hand was heavy on me, and my moisture was turning me into the drought of summer.

He was having a horrible time. And sometimes we Christian people have a horrible time. We don't have the joy of God in our heart.

We can be happy about this and happy about that, but really deep down inside, the joy of God is gone. And we need to think in terms of praying this prayer, restore unto me. But you know something? Before David prayed that prayer, other things had to happen.

We're going to come to that in a little while. Right now, why seek for joy? Why is it this important? We've already indicated because it's our strength. It's our power.

Then secondly, because without it, we've hinted at this, without this joy, we can't be successful in persuading other people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ. You may have read or heard of Billy Bray, the famous Cornish miner, mightily used of God. Why, sometimes even royalty came to hear him preach.

Very eccentric, but very mightily used of God. A very happy person. When he met people, sometimes he'd grab them and pick them up in his arms and dance around the room and he'd say to them, Be converted! And if they weren't, they better get converted.

And if they were, they got a bigger hug than ever. Well, someone said to him one time because they thought it was sort of put on. They said, Billy, haven't you had any trials? Oh, yes.

He said, I've had trials. He said, but you know what? The Lord's given me the vinegar with a teaspoon and the honey with a ladle. And so he had the joy of God in his soul.

And someone writing about Billy Bray said he attracted sinners just like honey attracts flies. They just came from all quarters because he was so full of the joy of God. And ought to have that joy of God because without it, we cannot persuade transgressors.

We cannot see sinners converted. Here's another reason. Because you can't read the Bible with real profit.

A lot of Christians, they read the Bible as if it was the newspaper. I mean, they come to it with about just as much enthusiasm as if it was the newspaper and sometimes with less. I rejoice that thy word is one that finds great spoil.

Now, he's not saying that the word of God made him happy. It couldn't have, he wasn't saying that, though. He's already happy when it comes to the word of God.

And you can just see him leaping to get his hands on the word of God so he can study it and read it. I rejoice that thy word is one that finds great spoil. I was in a little prayer meeting recently.

It was a blessed prayer meeting. Just about eight of us there. Eight men.

And a man of God, a godly person, he said, brethren, I get almost nothing out of studying the word of God. I want you to pray for me. Alright, something was wrong.

And he wasn't rejoicing at the word of God as a person who would find great spoil. Do you come to the word of God this way? You can hardly wait to get your hands on it, expose your heart to it, hear what God is saying. Because after all, the word of God is God's love letter to you today.

God has something to say to you, to me today from His word. And we must come to the word of God in this way. So we need the joy of God in our heart to read the Bible rightly.

And do you know something else? You can't give acceptably to God unless you have the joy of God in your soul because the Lord loves a cheerful giver. And the Greek word there is the word from which we get the English word hilarious. The Lord loves a hilarious giver.

I had an Irishman in one of my churches. He was both a deacon and a treasurer of the church. We were starting a church and we were small, so one guy might have six jobs, this kind of thing.

But he was the best treasurer you could ever have because, boy, when he had an extra \$10 to give to God, he'd leap about six feet in the air and click his heels together four times and just praise the Lord. One time he got a bonus of \$70. And he wasn't bragging to me.

I knew him too well for that. It wasn't that, but he was just so happy at \$70 he could give to God. He was just so joyful over it.

The Lord loves a cheerful giver. That's in 2 Corinthians 8. And in the same chapter, we read this about certain Christian people. Paul said, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

They were very, very poor, but they were very, very joyful. And you mix those two things together and they were giving and giving and giving again. I heard the testimony of a Christian worker who was invited to go to Korea to preach a series of messages on the deeper Christian life and so on.

When he got there, he asked some of the brethren, he said, would it be all right if I preached about tithing? And they looked at him and said, well, we'd rather you didn't. Oh, he said, don't they believe in tithing here? Well, he said, it's not that. They're so far beyond the tithe, we wouldn't want them to go back to giving the tithe.

And that brother said, he actually saw people take off an article of clothing and put it in the offering basket, take off their shoes and put it in the offering basket, take off their shirt, put it in the offering basket. He actually saw one man take the offering basket, put it on the floor, and he stood in the basket. He never had anything to give.

The Lord loves a cheerful giver. And so sometimes, like Billy Sunday used to say, we put a nickel on the collection plate and sing God be with you till we meet again. Lots of Christians give that.

Well, why in the world did I give that \$20? Man, I could have used it here. And I remember a Christian one time confessing to me how God had led him to sell a house to a certain person. And he sold it at a price \$10,000 less than he could have got on the market.

God told him to do it, so he did it. But then as the months went by, the devil got on his back and told him what a fool he was for giving this \$10,000. So to settle the thing, he went to the person and confessed the sin to the person to whom he had sold the house.

And then the joy of God returned to his soul. Alright. The abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

And Paul called this, in 2 Corinthians 8, proving the sincerity of your love. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. Then a Christian person can't go through trials and tribulations properly unless he has the joy of God in his heart.

When Paul and Silas were cast into jail at midnight, what were they doing? You know, feeling sad and sorry. You know, here we are knocking ourselves out for a gun and here we wind up in jail. What kind of a deal is this? No, it says they were singing praises and they were praying and the prisoners heard them and they were having the time of their life.

You know what a bit is? They put it in a horse's mouth. You know, in the dark ages they made bits for Christians. They didn't call them that but they were made out of wood.

And they stuck them in Christians' mouths and tied them behind their heads. Do you know why? Because when they were dying at the stake they were singing the praise of God and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and sinners were getting converted and so the wicked had to figure out some system to keep these people quiet when they were dying. If I have the joy of God in my soul, torture or tribulation is not going to cause it to dissipate and run out because that joy is dependent on the Lord.

And it's God's way. Alright. Romans chapter 5 it says, We glory in tribulations also.

James chapter 1 says, My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations. Do we do this? Do I have enough joy in my soul so when a trial or tribulation comes along I still rejoice? It's easy to sing, dear people, and be joyful, happy when the sun is shining, but it's difficult, it's different when things aren't right. One of the happiest Christians I ever knew was an old Russian woman called Mrs. Wonky.

She was a member of one of my churches and a godly woman. I used to go to fellowship with her just to get warmed up spiritually sometimes. I never ever saw her when she was sad.

She was always rejoicing and praising the Lord. Let me tell you something about her. She'd had six children, and all her children were dead but one, and her husband was dead, and her five children and her husband had all died in accidents.

I think a couple of them had drowned. One of them had been killed in an explosion. The other was in car accidents.

She'd lost them all. And the daughter she had living lived somewhere in the States, and she very seldom saw him. Mrs. Wonky lived in Boziger, Manitoba.

Now she had ulcers on her legs. She was usually very sick, seldom could come out to church. So one day I said to her, Sister Wonky, have you ever felt that God's given you a bad deal? And she looked at me with a pained look on her face.

And she went into a rhapsody of delight and told me how wonderful Jesus had been to her. Let me tell you something. I had her funeral.

The funeral was held in the town hall in Boziger. The place was packed to the doors. And in my 37 years as a preacher, it's the only time I had a meeting where the sinners were saying amen.

I would say, Mrs. Wonky was a real Christian, and the sinners said amen, preacher. That's right. They all knew.

She had a mighty, a powerful testimony in that area. Because she had the joy of God in her soul. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into different temptations.

All right? The joy of God. And there's another reason. Here's another reason.

Because it was the experience of the early Christians. You know, we're talking a lot nowadays. Lots of books written about the book of Acts and how we ought to be living the way we lived then.

So let's do that. Acts 13.52 it says, And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost. Now it doesn't say some of the Christians were filled with joy some of the time.

It says, And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. In other words, that was the normal experience of the average Christian back in those times. Filled with the Holy Spirit and filled with the joy of God.

So why shouldn't we seek for this? You know, sometimes, not often, but occasionally someone has come to me and said, Well now preacher, you know the Christian life is not that way. You know there's all kinds of trials and troubles. You know there's a lot of sorrow and crying in the Christian life.

You're not being honest. You're telling the people they're supposed to have the joy of God in their soul. I say, I'm telling you what the Word of God says.

The Bible doesn't say I'm not going to have trials. The Bible even says in 1 Peter 1, Though now for a season if need be you are in heaviness through manifold temptations, in heaviness through manifold temptations, but in the same context whom having not seen you love, in whom though now you see him not yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. That's in the same context in 1 Peter 1. Heavy, perhaps, yes, and yet deep down underneath joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Well, here are some good reasons why we need to have the joy of God in our heart. Here's another reason. And if you get rained on, just move.

If you're getting blessed, stay where you are. This is the kingdom of God. This is the kingdom of God.

It says so in Romans 14, 17 and 18. It's two verses in the Bible I get so excited about. You'll pardon me if I get excited again this morning.

You know, the kingdom of God, the Bible says, doesn't come with outward show because the kingdom of God is within you or among you. It's a spiritual thing. It doesn't come with outward show.

The kingdom of God is not in word but in power. Now, the Old Testament, there are three and a half times as many words, 3.5 times as many words in the Old Testament as in the New. And so the Old Testament is filled with do this, do this, do this, don't do that, don't do that, don't do that.

But there was no power there to enable the people to live the way they ought to live. So the New Testament is not in word but in power. There is power to live the Christian life.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. It's totally different now than it used to be. And so in Romans 14, 17, 18, the Word of God says this, the kingdom of God is not meat and drink.

Now, the Old Testament kingdom was a kingdom of meat and drink. It says this in the book of Hebrews. There was a time when carnal ordinances, he says it stood only in meat and drinks and different washings and carnal ordinances imposed on the people until the time of Reformation.

And the next words are, but Christ being come. Christ has come. And that's all done away.

You know, when David became king, what did he do? He dealt to every person in Israel a flagon of wine, a piece of flesh and a piece of bread. It was a kingdom of meat and drink in another sense. But the kingdom of God today is not meat and drink.

It's righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men. May I ask you this question? Do you have it? The kingdom of God, Colossians chapter 1 says, we have been translated out of Satan's kingdom, delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

And there's a distinct and a very definite and a strong, powerful sense in which the kingdom of God is already here. The kingdom of God, I repeat, is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Notice the order.

Righteousness first of all, then comes peace, and then comes joy. That's the kingdom of God. Now the kingdom of God will be manifested in a more complete way at the return of the Lord Jesus.

But in Matthew chapter 13, when Jesus Christ talked about that, He said that when He came back, He was going to send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they were going to gather. Listen carefully to the next words. They were going to gather out of His kingdom.

His kingdom was already there. But Satan had superseded, put his kingdom on top of the kingdom of God. And there was much garbage and much sin, much evil.

And so the angels of God are going to gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, all those things that cause sin. What a day! When the angels go flying around the world, hundreds of millions of angels smashing and breaking and destroying everything that causes sin in the world. And they'll gather out of the kingdom of God those who commit iniquity.

They'll be cast into a furnace of fire. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. That's the teaching of the Word of God.

And then what? And then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Christians don't make... I mean, as far as the world is concerned, Christians don't count today. That's not what the newspapers are all about.

That's not what most people are writing books about. But in the coming kingdom, when it's manifested in power and glory, the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. And the righteous will delight themselves.

The meek will delight themselves in the abundance of peace. And then, in fact, His dominion also shall be from sea to sea and from the river to the end of the earth. For the earth shall be filled or full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

They won't hurt or destroy all My holy kingdom, God said. Alright, it's the kingdom of God. It's righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit.

Now remember, that's Romans 14, 17, 18. Then look at Romans 15, 13. It's almost like a prayer.

And there Paul says, The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Are these just words? I mean, what is your reaction to that? Are these just words? The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost? Or is this something God really wants us to have and experience? I'm sure He wants us to have and experience this. People have sometimes asked me, What are the marks of a genuine revival? Well, there's more than one.

There's a spirit of repentance, the reality of God, a forsaking of sin, a spirit of love in the Solomon Islands. They never call it revival. They call it the falling of love.

Because when revival came to the Solomon Islands, it was a falling of love. God came over those churches and the people began to love one another with a pure heart, fervently in a way they'd never known before, the falling of love. And that's one of the characteristics of a genuine revival.

God's people begin to love. Let me give you an illustration. When revival came to our church in 1971, there were five men from my church and I were driving to Winnipeg, 515 miles from Saskatoon.

You know something? There was a praise and prayer meeting the whole way. Nobody saw that herd of beautiful black Angus cattle out in the field. And nobody saw that beautiful house here.

Nobody saw this, nobody saw that. They said, let's pray for so-and-so. Let's pray for this missionary.

And then they praised the Lord for a while. And it was ten hours. I tell people, it was the longest prayer meeting on earth.

I was in a prayer meeting 515 miles long. And I was in Edmonton, 370 miles from Saskatoon, the crusade. And I looked down and there was a bunch of my people waving their love to me from the congregation.

They have to drive all Sunday night to get back to me at work Monday morning. So what? You know, before the revival came, if I was preaching in bigger Saskatchewan, which is only 50 miles from

Saskatoon, I never saw one of my people there. Then I'm down in Winnipeg holding a crusade for five weeks.

And I look down, there's my people. I come down, they're waving to me. They've driven 515 miles.

I was going to Sarnia, Ontario, which is a long way from Saskatoon. I forget now. Is it 1400 miles or more? Maybe more than that.

It's not that far from Toronto actually. And some people came and said, we have holidays coming up. If you need us down there in Sarnia, do some counseling, we'll be there.

Just let us know, we'll come down. I never saw that before. But these are some of the themes.

Righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost. Oh, the God of hope, fill you, fill me with all joy and peace in believing that we may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. I think it was Billy Sonny that said, the average Christian is so sad, he can eat dry oatmeal porridge out of the end of a three inch gas pipe.

Let's consider a question. How is joy lost? If we're saved, we had it. Therefore, with joy, shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation? I'll never forget the day I got saved.

I got saved by myself down in the basement of our house in Winnipeg. There was a two by four from the ceiling to the floor and I had this two by four I was holding onto it praying and I asked the Lord to enter my life and He did. And I went up those stairs about four at a time to tell my mother and my older brother, they were both Christians, what God had done for me.

And I was just tearing around the house. I thought, so full of the joy of God. It didn't stay.

It could have. But I got into problems and so on. I had to deal with them and I found the joy came back when I got honest with God.

But someone had said that sin springs a leak in the cup of joy. Therefore, with joy, shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation? So we've all had it if we're saved. But maybe we've lost it.

Sin springs a leak in the cup of joy. David lost his joy. Remember, day and night, thy hand was heavy upon me.

My moisture turned into the drought of summer. He had no joy. It was gone.

And you can't whip it up when it isn't there. Most Christians are half full and they're desperately trying to splash over. That's not God's method.

You know, the Bible talks about in us, a well of water, an artesian well, springing up into everlasting life without my effort. The Spirit of God, if He's in my heart, ungrieved, He'll be constantly bubbling up and flowing out through me. Oh dear people, we need this and we ought to covet it more than anything else in life, to have a heart that's right with God.

Do you remember the man called Simon the Sorcerer in the book of Acts? It says he believed and then he was baptized. But then Peter said, your heart is not right in the sight of God. He had believed in Christ.

He had been baptized and all the rest of it. He continued with Philip wondering and beholding the miracles and wonders, the signs he saw. Yet his heart wasn't right.

He said, your heart's not right. You're full of bitterness. You're in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity.

Repent therefore of this thy wickedness. Is your heart right? Or is your heart not right with God? Do you have the joy that God is speaking of? How do we lose it? Well, we lose it through sin like David lost his, lost it after another man's wife, sinned with her, and then just watch slimy self go to work in the story of David, 2 Samuel 11 and 12, as he plots for this man, this man's death, manages it, covers it up, hypocrisy, lying, murder, adultery, the whole thing. Lost his joy.

Will sin dazzle or deem us in the word of God? Paul said, deem us has forsaken me having loved this present world. You know the man called Chuck Templeton, some of you have heard about him, years ago here in Canada while he lived in Toronto, I think he preached in the church that the Alliance finally, the second, which I forget now, the Avenue Road Alliance Church, they're not there now, I don't understand their movement. But anyway, he was there for some while, packed that building out, great things happened.

Then he began to slide until finally today, while he's divorced his wife, he's an agnostic, if not an atheist. But I read something that spoke to my heart a while ago, someone had interviewed him and written this article, and at the end of the article he said, I came away from this interview with Chuck Templeton saying to myself, I have been talking to a very unhappy man. If he ever knew the Lord, how could he be happy living as he's living today? Demas has forsaken me having loved this present world.

I can tell you one thing, I don't know anything else about Demas, but I'll tell you one thing he never had in joy. Sad, sorrowful, I don't know how he ended. Maybe he repented and came back to God.

I hope he did, but I don't really know. Demas has forsaken me having loved this present world. Peter, he denied the Lord.

Did he go out shouting happy? No, it says Peter went out and wept bitterly because he denied Jesus. There are times when we deny Jesus by our very silence. We may not say what Peter said, we may not blaspheme like he did, but there's many times when we have opportunities to share Jesus Christ and we don't do it.

No people. I know God has shown me opportunities that I might have lost and I'm sure some I have lost by being quiet when I should have spoken for Jesus. Have you ever heard of George Whitefield? I'm sure you have, the famous English field preacher.

He was an ordained Anglican clergyman and believe it or not, back in those days, they had a law in the Anglican church that preachers could only preach at two stated times a day. I mean 11 o'clock in the morning, 7 o'clock at night. I'm not sure of the exact hours, but only two times a day and you could not preach apart from these two hours without it being what they called irregular conduct.

Well, here is George Whitefield preaching four, five, six times a day. When he got sick, he wrote to some friends and said, I'm now put down by the doctor to the short allowance of preaching only four times a day. Anyway, somebody reported to the bishop that George Whitefield's conduct was very irregular.

He was preaching at other than the stated times. So the bishop called him in. They had a few pleasantries and then the bishop got down to business and said, Now, my dear George, I understand you're not obeying the laws of the church.

You're supposed to preach at two stated times and you're not. Oh, yes, he said, I am. Oh, really, you are? Yes, he said, in season and out of season.

And, dear people, that's how God is. Some people say, well, I strike when the iron is hot and others say, well, I strike until the iron gets hot. And you can do it either way.

Some people have so much tact they have no contact at all. They're always waiting for the right opportunity and the person finally dies. I was down in Detroit a while ago and something happened in a meeting.

A young man got to his seat and he was crying. A fellow probably in his twenties and he said, Preacher, can I say something? I said, yes. And he told us his story.

He'd only been a Christian eight months. He'd run with a gang that were gambling all the time. And when he got converted, God told him to go to his own witness to share the gospel with his friends and he didn't go.

And he said, last night, my best friend from that gang was shot to death in a card game. He says, Preacher, is there any way I can get a message across to my friend? He was just bawling his heart out and he said, is there any way I can get a message across to my friend and tell him I'm sorry I didn't tell him about Jesus? I said, no, there isn't really. But you can learn from what's happened.

I'm going to forget that as long as I live. He had an opportunity and God urged him and he didn't take it. I know what's happened to him.

I remember one time I went to a home to try and lead a Catholic couple to Jesus and they were so nice and seemed to be so happy I thought to myself, well, man, I can't break into this. Maybe they are saved. So I didn't even ask them.

I did what we often do to palliate our conscience. I read the scripture and prayed. You know, we think that God has called us to read the scripture and pray in sinners' homes.

He never ever called us to do either. I mean, it's hard to do it. But you can visit 10,000 homes and read the scripture and pray in every home and not do the will of God once.

On the other hand, you can visit 10,000 homes and never read the scripture or pray once and do the will of God every time. Because God didn't say go into all the world and read the scripture and pray. He said go into all the world and preach the gospel.

And that's hard to do. It's harder to do than reading scripture and praying. Anyway, at the door a lady turned to me and she asked me a question which was so directly related to the gospel even I couldn't miss.

And I picked it up and explained the gospel and the two of them got saved. And afterwards or first when she was saved she ran to the wall. There was a crucifix on the wall.

I hadn't said anything about the crucifix. She grabbed this crucifix. She jerked it off the wall.

She ran to the door and she threw it far off into the night. She said, I've known for years that that was an idol. But I never had the strength until now to get rid of it.

But then she said this to me. This is embarrassing. She said, if I had not asked you that question you would not have told us how to be saved tonight would you have? Oh, that was an embarrassing moment.

Because she was right. And God was spanking me. All right.

Peter was silent when he should have been speaking. He lost the joy. And even if it cost her life there's a beautiful little book it's called The Christ of the Korean Heart.

It's not in print now but if you can get a copy you better get it and read it. It will really bless you. Among many other wonderful things in the book there was a story of two brothers.

The communists had come down from the north and overrun the village where they lived. And the first thing the communists were doing when they overran villages in South Korea they were getting the Christians and killing them. And they got these two brothers and they offered them the option of giving up their faith in Christ or of dying.

Well, they never even considered that. They just looked at this guy like he was out of his mind. Give up Christ.

So they ignored this gang of communists who were standing around them and the two brothers began they were 18 and 20 or so they began arguing as to which one ought to die first. So the younger said he wanted to die first he wanted to see Jesus first and the older said no, I want to see Jesus first and here they're arguing in front of these people as to who would see Jesus first. Well, this kind of unnerved the communists but they put them against the wall and shot them both at the same time so they both saw Jesus at the same time.

But the leader of this communist gang could never get away from it and six months later he defected to the south he gave himself up and when the war was over he found the Lord in the meantime he united with some Christians down there and they went all over South Korea they were in hundreds of churches eventually and they reenacted in drama form the thing that had happened that day and they said that hundreds of people found Jesus Christ. Well, they weren't worried about dying or going to see Jesus. To depart and be with Christ is far better or to have the joy of God.

In this fashion but they lose it we were ashamed of the Lord Jesus Christ. You know the high school across the street from our church in Saskatoon prior to the revival the Christian kids were trying to carry on one Bible study a week and getting a small handful of kids off nothing was happening at all. After the revival they had five Bible studies going in that school that's five weeks later one week I remember 15 high school kids found Jesus Christ as their savior through the witness of these Christian kids and we have a saying you've heard it before the revival one of the things it did was make the Christians come out of the woodwork.

You know my son was in university for three years he's this year in Sweden taking his last year but he said dad it's really key he said you know if a professor at the university now if he says anything that could be even remotely construed as an attack upon the Christian faith he backs up he apologizes he wants the

class to understand he's not attacking anything he's not attacking anything because he knows if he doesn't make this matter clear there will be half a dozen or a dozen Christians on their feet challenging him in the class and that never happened before 1971 I can tell you that because I had all kinds of students coming to me for counseling professors were knocking them over the head and ridiculing their faith and they didn't know what to do so the Christians came out of the

woodwork Peter went into the woodwork and lost his jaw so these are some things that cause us to lose our joy now it's impossible for me to do the kind of justice to what I'm the theme that I'd like to do today because of the time so we're going to have to short it down somewhat but I could say this what brings joy to the Christian heart well Jesus said hitherto have you asked nothing in mind and he asked and you shall receive that your joy may be what for all if you're not seeing the Lord answer prayer in your life then you're not experiencing the fullness of joy either it's impossible a man who'd been a Christian worker for 15 years and then got discouraged and left the ministry he told me that in all his years as a Christian he couldn't think of any one thing that God ever had done

other than answer to prayer do you know what George Mueller said well that's what he said what he did he had a book a kind of a ledger and in one column he registered the prayer on the day he began to pray at the date and in the other column he registered when God answered the prayer now here's what he said and I'm not exaggerating he said that he had had 55,000 answers to prayer the same day he prayed then he had 35,000 answers to prayer that took a little longer weeks, months or maybe years he prayed for two men for 40 years one man wasn't converted until a month before Mueller died and one fellow was converted some while after Mueller died and somebody talking with George Mueller when he was an old man he said Brother Mueller don't you ever give up in your faith when God doesn't answer

right away and he said George Mueller he drew himself to his full height and he said I never give up when God gives me something I never give up 85,000 answers to prayer does God play favorites? listen in Midale, Saskatchewan there lives a man called Sam Moser Sam will be 100 years old on his next birthday he's as straight as that tent pole there his mind is clear his eyesight and hearing are good he's one of the greatest witnesses for God I know and he's got a prayer list 7 feet long and he prays for every name in the prayer list everyday and back in the revival in 1971 I remember then he was probably 92 or 93 years of age I preached a revival message I gave an invitation and up to his feet jumped the man the man in the congregation the man who needed it the least of all he said Brother

Bill I need prayer and he dropped on his knees at a chair and we went up and knelt with him and prayed for old Sam Moser I asked Sam one time I said Sam how many tracts do you give out in a year he said I don't count them he said I weigh them he said I give out about a quarter of a ton every year and he's filled with the joy of God I've never met old Sam Moser but my heart has been blessed he's so in touch in tune with Jesus you know and his heart is filled with the love of God the joy of the Lord and God doesn't play favorites with people it could be the lot of any of us here if we were willing to open our lives completely to Him I say again sin springs a leak in the cup of joy thy words were found and I did eat them and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart for I am

called by thy name O Lord God of hosts now in closing supposing I sense I know I don't have the fullness of joy the way I should what can I do about it? well first of all we need to ask God to search our hearts and show us what the problems are now you may think you know what the problems are in your heart you will probably know some things you'll have the right answers for some things but I'll guarantee that you probably don't know it all only God knows it all would you be bold enough to pray the prayer of Psalm 139

23 and 24 searching me O God and know my heart you've been asking God to search your wife or to search your husband or your kids or your parents or your neighbor or somebody else deacon or elder somebody preacher have you ever asked God to search your heart and really meant

it? because if you do that God will lay the whole thing on the table he'll show you what the problems are he'll show you why there's a hole in the cup of joy God is so faithful does the Bible say he'll do it? yes it does in Job chapter 36 now there God's talking about the righteousness says with kings are they on the throne and God discusses the possibility of this righteous person being tied up because he falls into sin then what happens? now listen carefully it says then he God he shows them their work and their transgressions that they have exceeded and he opens their ear to discipline and he commands that they return from iniquity what does he do? he shows us our work he shows us our backsliding he shows us our sins he shows us the things that are grieving his Holy Spirit that are

preventing him from filling us with the love of God and the joy of the Spirit he shows us then we confess them that's what David did he said I acknowledge my transgressions unto thee and mine iniquity have I not hid I said I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord and you forgave the iniquity of my sin God forgave the wickedness of his lawlessness the iniquity of his sin but he had to confess it how can God forgive that which I'm not willing to confess Duncan Campbell a famous revivalist from the Hebrides was in our church one time and he said something I didn't quite get it you know that song Calvary covers it all well he said Calvary covers it all no it doesn't he said it doesn't cover it all then he said this he said Calvary doesn't cover the sin that you will not uncover and he's

right we're not talking about salvation no we're talking about the Christian walking in fellowship with God in the fullness of the spirit of God Calvary doesn't cover the sin that I will not uncover so I have to uncover it there's a man in our church in Saskatoon he's walking in the spirit yet and God did a profound thing during the revival in 71 I know when I dealt with this man at the time there were two or three of us praying with him and I was sort of leading a session and he was confessing sins that God was showing him and then he stopped and I just sensed strongly he wasn't through yet so I said my brother is that all and there was a struggle and he confessed two or three things more and I said my brother is that all God's talking to you about and he confessed one or two things more

and it was a long pause and I said my brother is that all because if it's not all God isn't going to meet you you have to get right to the bottom of everything and there was a struggle and then he blurted out one word and I knew it was all and you know God filled him with the spirit he told me that for months after that God just led him from person to person and sharing and witnessing yet a most delightful walk with God and he's still living that transparent life walking with God but dear people we have to get to the bottom of it and only God can help us do that search me oh God and know my heart my friends can help me here and I can help myself but it's only God that really knows the things that are way bad let me illustrate that briefly I was in Winnipeg in five weeks of a crusade back

in 71 72 we began well we began before Christmas and went for three weeks in January as well and God did some wonderful things and I was in a church called Elam Chapel and 28 years before I'd been a member of that congregation and I'd left the church because well the chairman of the board had a liquor bar in the basement of his home and the church wouldn't discipline him and they let the thing go and so I left the church along with some other people and I wrote a very very nasty letter to the church well I really told them what I thought I mean I really pinned their ears on the wall and any time I thought about that letter in the intervening years I had a little smug feeling in my heart that I'd done the right thing because

those people were a bunch of rotten sinners and they wouldn't

take care of us backsliding the church and so on I really felt justified so here I am I'm renting their building I'm holding meetings in their building and God's doing great things and one night now notice how the Lord did this I mean the Lord is so marvelous a couple of people came and they said we've got a university student here and we've been counseling we can't help him do you think you can help him Bill? and I said well I'll try so we talked together and prayed together and he asked God to search his heart and it all came out he'd had a fight in the church he'd left the church he'd been saying some nasty things about the church so I told him exactly what to do to make this thing right and he went out of there just as happy as a lark and he wasn't out the door when the Lord said now

what about you?

I said what about me? He said what about you in this church 28 years ago? and the Lord laid the whole thing on the table and I was horrified I said God I'm the crusader how in the world can I do this?

God said well you're telling the other people how to do it why don't you do it yourself? oh what a scandal I had that night and I knew a blessing would start to dissipate if I didn't obey God so the next morning I contacted the pastor of Elam Chapel and made arrangements to make this thing right see God's the only one that knows and God will bring it to your attention if you're willing then you have to forsake it he that covers his sins shall not prosper but who so confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy and the next verse says blessed is the man that always fears that is always fears God but he that hardens his heart shall fall into evil into mischief into evil don't ever harden your heart against God that statement is given four times in the word of God today if you hear his voice

harden not your hearts don't ever allow the devil to harden your heart against the voice of God keep a tender heart you may struggle for a while but don't harden your heart you may find it very difficult to go to a certain person and make things right but don't give up on it don't harden your heart against God Job said God makes my heart soft let him do it confess it then there may be restitution like when you confess in Luke 18 the story of Zacchaeus and our brother dealt with that in a wonderful way this morning Zacchaeus the half of my goods I give to the poor and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation I restore him fourfold listen carefully these are things that happened before he was a Christian they were and sometimes Christians say well the things that happened

before I was a Christian they are all forgiven they are under the blood I don't have to monkey around with that maybe God would have you monkey around with that because Zacchaeus certainly did let God speak to your heart then of course we have to be filled with the spirit of God you know it says in 1 Thessalonians chapter 1 you receive the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost only the spirit of God can fill our hearts with the joy of God when things are right the fullness and the joy will be there and of course faith we have to call I'm going to close to go back again to Romans 15 13 the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace the next two words in believing through faith the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope through the

power of the Holy Spirit or 1 Peter chapter 1 where he says concerning Jesus whom having not seen you love in whom though now you see him not yet believing Paul says in believing Peter says yet believing you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory so then when things are right between my soul and God and by faith I've entered into Galatians 2 20 I reckon myself to be crucified with Jesus then I have a perfect right to pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit and believe God for it I don't have to wait for feelings I can

claim this by faith and thank God feelings will come probably different ways to different people but leave that with God be filled with the Spirit that's a command to be obeyed and when God gives a command his commandments are his enablings God will do it when my

heart is right the prayer restore unto me the joy of thy salvation then will I teach transgressors thy ways and sinners shall be converted unto thee

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