

Joy Because of Justification

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We have seen that humiliation because of sin is the first experience of Christianity and without it there can be no salvation. The good news of the Gospel is for sinners only. The self-righteous cannot be saved because they trust in themselves and their own works. The degree to which sinners will experience conviction and feel their guilt varies. After conversion the experience of humiliation because of sin can be intense as is seen in many examples — Job, Isaiah, Peter and Paul. The depth of humiliation has a profound effect upon the believer, particularly with reference to understanding and practising the doctrines of grace. Spurgeon put it this way:

Hardly a glimmer of the humbling truth of our natural depravity dawns on the dull apprehension of the worldly-wise, though souls taught from above know it and are appalled by it. In divers ways the discovery comes to those whom the Lord ordains to save. . . . There is a vital connection between soul-distress and sound doctrine. Sovereign grace is dear to those who have groaned deeply because they see what grievous sinners they are. Witness Joseph Hart and John Newton whose hymns you have often sung, or David Brainerd and Jonathan Edwards, whose biographies many of you have read.¹

Also we have observed that the new birth takes place after, before or during conviction, *i.e.* in some cases it might precede, in other cases it might follow. That the new birth precedes saving faith and saving repentance is fundamental to the Reformed faith, but, again as we have seen, it has always been a matter of debate as to how much conviction or preparation goes on in a sinner before the new birth is wrought by the Holy Spirit. Some believe in more preparatory work prior to the new birth than others. Jonathan Edwards in his writings shows that during revivals many come under deep

¹ *The Early Tears*, p. 52.

convictions, only to fall away in the course of time. Conviction of sin must be evangelical, that is it must be toward God.

While humiliation for sin plays a dominant and abiding role in the realm of experience, so too does joy. Indeed, the deeper and stronger the roots of humiliation, the greater and better the tree which will be full of the most glorious fruit of joy. Richard Sibbes uses another figure suggesting that,

There are two eyes in experience, one upon God and one upon our present situation. God will bring us to comfort but it must be by a sense of our own unworthiness. He will forgive our sins but it must be by the sight and sense of our sins. He will bring us to life but it must be by death. He will bring us to glory but it must be by shame, God works by contraries: therefore in contraries believe contraries.²

The whole life should radiate joy, power, peace and purity in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14:17), but this cannot be unless there is a clear understanding of what sin is and a commensurate appreciation of the magnitude of God's grace. Paul truly felt and believed himself to be the chief of sinners. His gratitude was unbounded and this was reflected in his worship and service of God. Those who have little, if any, conviction wonder at this. Let us hear Spurgeon again:

I question whether any one coming among us could bear to see himself as God sees him. I think it is highly probable that, if any man were to see his own heart as it really is, he would go mad; it would be a sight too dreadful for an awakened conscience and a sensitive reason to endure. And when the Lord does come to any of his servants, and reveals sin in its true character, unless there is a corresponding revelation of the cleansing blood, it puts man into a very dreadful condition of mind.³

We might get to grips with the subject of joy as an experience by using the following headings:

1. What is joy?
2. The joy of salvation
3. Joy because of justification.
4. The relationship of joy to power.
5. How to obtain joy.

1. *What is joy?*

² Quoted from the 1962 Puritan Conference Papers, p. 26.

³ Sermons, vol. 40, p. 134.

Joy can be defined as a sense of gladness or delight. It is a quality of heart, a well-being of soul. It can be steady and express itself in the singing to oneself of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, or it can be intense and unrestrained, expressing itself in the form of leaping for joy. The Hebrew verb *gil gul* means to leap or to have intense joy. The other word, used more frequently in the Old Testament, is *simchah* denoting rejoicing, gladness or mirth. Associated with these words is the idea of excitement.

In the New Testament we again find two words used. *Chara*, which is more frequently found, simply means joy, while *agalliasis* denotes intense joy. This last word is related to the concept of leaping. We read of the lame man at the gate of the temple called Beautiful who, when he was healed, immediately received strength in his feet and ankle bones and, leaping up, entered into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. To be joyful is to find our souls leaping with praise and gladness. When the ark was brought up to Jerusalem it was by dancing and leaping that David gave expression to the joy of his soul (2 Sam. 6:16).

Joy is an attribute of God. It is customary to think of the attributes of God as communicable and incommunicable; immutability, eternity, infinity, omnipotence and omniscience constituting those attributes of which we do not, and of which we cannot, partake. Among the communicable attributes are: love, justice, anger, holiness, patience and joy. Some of these attributes of which we partake belong to the realm of heart experience.

Rightly we associate joy with life. In getting to grips with the meaning of joy it is helpful to observe the difference between the joy of God and the frustration of the unbelieving world that rejects God. Men long for life, fulfilment, satisfaction. The tragedy is that they are at enmity with God and refuse to look to the only source of fulfilment. They seek joy and cannot find it. The ungodly man is ever in quest of joy and often confuses joy with carnal gratification or sensual pleasure. William Romaine states the matter well when he says:

They are busy, and weary themselves in the pursuit of it, and cannot find it. While they are turned in heart from the Lord, they look downwards for it; where it is not. They expect it will spring out of the ground: and if they cannot discover it upon the surface, they will dig into the bowels of the earth for treasures of hidden joy. But they disquiet themselves in vain. It is the sovereign decree of the Almighty that nothing can make the sinner truly happy but God in Christ.⁴

It would be strange if we did not find joy among the attributes of God, for the three persons of the Trinity in themselves enjoy perfect felicity without the addition of any created beings (Prov. 8:30). The angels rejoiced in the creation (Job 38:7) and God viewed with satisfaction that which he had made (Gen. 1:31). We do not read that he

⁴ *The Life of Faith*. William Romaine, Works vol. I.

rejoiced over the creation, but he does rejoice and even sing over redemption. He sings over his redeemed people. 'The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing' (Zeph. 3:17).

Likewise, the Father's gift to him of a people is the joy of Christ. For this joy set before him he endured the cross (Heb. 12:2). The joy of salvation is also reflected in Paul's words to the Philippians where he describes them as, 'my joy, and crown' (Phil. 4:1). As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride so does Christ rejoice over his church (Ps. 45:11; Rev. 21:2).

The angels rejoice over one sinner who repents (Luke 15:10), a timely reminder to us that we are to rejoice in the same way. It is a temptation during barren times, when very few are saved, to cease to marvel and rejoice in the salvation of the few that may make up the local church. If we cease to rejoice over our brothers and sisters, then we have in one way lost touch with heaven and eternity, for eternity will be taken up in understanding and extolling the wonders of God's grace in salvation (Eph. 1:1-13).

The very life of God is a life of joy and into that life we are brought by the truth of the Gospel. The life of Christ is a life of joy and to be in union with him is to partake of his joy. Hence he prays that 'they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves' (Jn. 17:13).

The joy of God's people is threefold, i. The joy of salvation, ii. The experience which follows, namely, the joy of communion with the triune God, this being the joy of eternity. (Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever, *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, I). iii. The joy we derive from the gifts which God gives us. ('How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' (Rom. 8:32).).

2. *The joy of salvation*

Says Paul: 'We joy in the atonement (reconciliation)' (Rom. 5:11). Unless we have some assurance of having been reconciled to God, true joy is impossible. On the other hand, a strong assurance of reconciliation and of God's love to us helps to assist and increase our joy. Note the experience of John Flavel, and particularly the relationship between Christian joy and 'the full assurance of his interest' in salvation:

There going on his way his thoughts began to swell and rise higher and higher like the waters in Ezekiel's vision, till at last they became an overwhelming flood. Such was the intention of his mind, such the ravishing tastes of heavenly joys, and such the full assurance of his interest therein, that he utterly lost all sight and sense of the world and all the concerns thereof, and for some hours he knew no more where he was than if he had been in a deep sleep upon his bed. Arriving in great exhaustion at a certain spring he sat down and washed, earnestly desiring, if it was God's good pleasure, that this might be his parting place from the world. Death

had the most amiable face in his eye that ever he beheld, except the face of Jesus Christ which made it so, and he does not remember, though he believed himself dying, that he even thought of his dear wife and children or any earthly concernment. On reaching his inn the influence still continued banishing sleep — still, still the joy of the Lord overflowed him and he seemed to be an inhabitant of the other world. He many years after called that day one of the days of heaven, and professed that he understood more of the life of heaven by it than by all the books he ever read or discourses he ever entertained about it.⁵ (Flavel wrote this in the third person, it being assumed by most readers that he was describing his own experience.)

The joy of salvation can be viewed as continuing and growing in depth through this life, and also as eternal. The Ethiopian eunuch, having had salvation in Christ revealed to him, 'went on his way rejoicing' (Acts 8:39). The Philippian jailor 'rejoiced, believing in God with all his house' (Acts 16:34). This joy of salvation, though fluctuating because of trials and testings, should increase as the believer is grounded and settled in the truth. Joy is also described as 'everlasting'. 'And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away' (Is. 35:10).

Not all apparent joy is genuine, for in the parable of the sower we are warned of 'stony ground hearers', who receive the word with joy, but not having any root in themselves, endure for a little but when tribulation or persecution arises they fall away (Matt. 13:21, 22). Entertainment evangelism, which predominates in many areas and countries, but particularly in North America, tends to produce temporary faith. Many are impressed by fervour, by crowds, by singing and by eloquence. Although they respond to appeals to decide for Christ they are not savingly joined to Christ and therefore they fall away. Their joy is produced by feelings only rather than by union with Christ by faith.

Joy because of salvation and joy in the God of salvation should always be central and predominant, but this very often is not the case when a teaching ministry and biblical oversight are absent. Some who are not truly converted become active in such churches. Their experience is one which is fed by feelings. A good service to them is a service in which there is emotion, excitement or activity. They are able to discuss external questions about organization and can converse about practical matters and even argue about doctrine at the intellectual level, but when it comes to experience of the heart and communion with God, they are destitute.

3. Joy because of justification

⁵ Quoted from the 1961 Puritan Conference Papers, p. 58.

Experience must spring out of salvation and the knowledge of salvation is clarified by the doctrine of justification. Our glorying must be in God's grace and in his free justification of those who believe. This is well illustrated by the case of the seventy disciples who, returning from their preaching mission, rejoiced in the fact of their power over devils. Richard Baxter, commenting on this passage, says:

They relished most delightfully in the external part. But the great end of these miracles they too much overlooked: they left out of their rejoicing the appearances of God, the advantages of faith, the promotion of the spiritual Kingdom of Christ, and the greater mercies of the Gospel as to themselves and others. They took too great a share of the honour to themselves, being more affected to see what great things they were made the instruments to accomplish, than what honour did thereby accrue to God and benefit to man.⁶

Every word of Baxter's statement is applicable today. Is it not true that we all tend by nature to be impressed by externals, by sensations, by the fantastic and fabulous, by statistics, by successes and by glamour stories, whether it be tramping through sweltering jungles, or smuggling Bibles into Communist countries?

Jesus cured what Baxter called the 'diseased joys', and directed the disciples to rejoice in their election, that their names were written in heaven (Luke 10:20). That we are to rejoice in these fundamental blessings of God is very encouraging because it means that we do not have to travel long distances to discover some secret formula for joy. All blessing is near us, even in the Word of God, and the greatest blessings, according to Paul, are election, predestination, adoption, redemption, a knowledge of the truth and of our eternal inheritance (Eph. 1:1-12). Our experience of joy is connected with all these, but justification underlies them all and supports them all. Our joy should never be apart from the consideration of justification, because justification is based on the atoning death of Christ. Every time we celebrate the Lord's Supper we are reminded of the fact that apart from Christ's sacrifice there is no justification.

Justification vindicates God's holiness, magnifies the doctrines of sovereign grace (Rom. 3:21-26), and provides believers with an impregnable fortress against Satan's wiles and accusations. God the Father justifies believers, and if the Father justifies, who can overthrow such a foundation? (Rom. 8:33-39).

Faith is the means by which we are united to Christ and this union is the basis of our justification. His triumph on the Cross secures our justification and we now see him with the eyes of faith as our saviour and justifier. 'Though we see him not,' says Peter, 'yet believing on him we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'

⁶ Quoted from the 1962 Puritan Conference Papers, p. 28.

John Brown, in his *Expository Discourses on First Peter*, takes 'ye do rejoice with joy unspeakable' in the future tense, as do a minority of commentators. Brown interprets Peter as contrasting the present trials with the joy of future glory. I believe this interpretation to be erroneous because we have three verbs in the present tense: 'you continue to rejoice' (v. 6), 'you continue to love' (v. 8), 'you continue to rejoice' (v. 8). The present tense verbs for 'you continue to rejoice' are identical in verses 6 and 8. In other words, Peter is speaking of the experience of joy we have now in this present world. Clear views of justification foster a strong sense of joy because the believer sees his salvation is determined by an omnipotent God. He dare not turn away for he knows that only those who persevere prove to be the elect. The justified are saved by faith and they live thereafter by faith (Rom. 1:17). The omnipotent God saves them and they rejoice in such a God who will keep them by his power through faith unto salvation (1 Pet. 1:15). Richard Baxter states the matter well:

What should be rejoiced in, if not the Lord of life himself who is the everlasting joy and glory of the saints? — other things may be the means of conveyance, but God is the matter of our joy — It is congruous that we now rejoice in that which we must everlastingly rejoice in. Herein is the state of everlasting joy, and therefore the foresight of it by faith is the only way to rational, solid comfort here.⁷

4. *The relationship of joy to power*

We have seen that conviction of sin and repentance are essential. Chastisement afterwards results in the peaceable fruits of righteousness (Heb. 12:11). 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning' (Ps. 30:5). The Corinthians were buffeted by controversy over the discipline of the unrepentant, immoral man, but the purging effects were profitable (2 Cor. 7:9-11). A proper balance must always be observed between what we are and what we deserve as sinners on the one hand and the wonder of justification on the other. Hence Nehemiah exhorts the people to be joyful — not sorry only, but to be glad, for 'the joy of the Lord is your strength' (Neh. 8:10).

There is power in a rightly-grounded joy. Paul and Silas, although scourged, sang at midnight though their position in stocks in a dungeon seemed hopeless. There is something irresistible about a man who has the joy of the Holy Spirit. He cannot be overcome because by faith he sees Christ, rejoices in Christ, is empowered by Christ and finds that Christ's strength in him is able to overcome opposition from the world. Note the testimony of Rowland Taylor on his way to martyrdom. 'All the way Taylor was *joyful* and *happy*, as one that accounted himself going to a most pleasant banquet, or bridal feast. He spake many notable things to the sheriff and yeoman of the guard that conducted him, and often moved them to weep through his earnest calling upon them to repent, and to amend their evil and wicked living. Often, also, he caused them to

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 29.

wonder and rejoice, to see him so constant and steadfast, void of all fear, *joyful in heart and glad to die*' (italics mine).

A joyful believer is a man bold in his witness to Jesus Christ. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be filled with the life of God, which means that various characteristics will be observable in a symmetry, balance and proportion; attributes such as meekness, love, wisdom, submission to the truth and the rule of Christ, peace, patience, self-control and joy. All are present but one can predominate at certain times. 'The disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost' (Acts 13:52).

Joy imparted by the Holy Spirit through the Word enables men to endure and persevere through difficult times and circumstances as did Jeremiah who testified that God's Word was the joy and rejoicing of his heart (Jer. 15:16). Likewise Habakkuk was sustained in very barren times saying, 'I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation' (Hab. 3:18). Joy will not only strengthen a man to persevere but will help to empower a preacher. John the Baptist declared his joy to be in the Bridegroom, rejoicing greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: 'this my joy therefore is fulfilled' (John 3:29). The Holy Spirit used the advent of Christ to inspire John to be the powerful and influential preacher that he was.

5. *How to obtain joy*

While it is unfortunate that name tags have to be used, it is increasingly evident that two movements in particular claim to have the answers to the needs of believers of the world today, the Reformed and the Charismatic. The Reformed concentrates on truth and the Charismatic on experience. According to the Charismatics, the pathway to joy and power is through an experience called the baptism of the Spirit. Fervent attempts are made to induce this experience. Expressions such as 'Amen Lord' are repeated, choruses are sung, everybody prays at the same time, hands are laid on seekers and some speak in tongues. (This by no means applies to all Pentecostals but docs characterize the present Charismatic surge.) Bodily sensations will be felt by seekers akin to the physical impulses felt when hearing music of a most inspired character. In the quest for experience, feeling and emotion is maximised and truth minimised. Experience is sought within the atmosphere of experience and within the context of the experience of others. When it comes to explaining or defining these experiences as they relate to truth we find great difficulty. What produced the experience? Those who have the experience will testify to more love for the Lord and joy. But the experience is mystical and beyond definition. It is subjective inasmuch as it has its seat or location within the person and belongs essentially to feelings. It is not objective as was Stephen's joy in dying when he saw the Lord. Stephen's joy proceeded from Christ to his heart by the Holy Spirit. Stephen's experience was grounded in, and sprang from, the Word, as can be seen from the character of his sermon.

The joy that has its spring in feelings alone is transient. This can be illustrated by reference to people who have an intense love for hymns or religious music. By using

records or tapes of hymns such people can easily experience joy, but this joy is attached to and belongs to the sentiments of the tunes and the music. Let a crisis or setback suddenly arise and the joy evaporates. In contrast we find the joy which is grounded in the truth will be responsive to setbacks and difficulties. Some can experience joy because they are affected by dramatic architecture and feel a glow within when influenced by certain spatial effects, but remove the buildings and the joy is soon gone. Again, there can be joy when there is exciting activity but when the excitement ends, little joy remains.

The way to obtain joy is to maximise truth but never at the expense of affections, emotions and feelings. Truth is for the whole man. Intellectualism, or truth apart from its application by the Holy Spirit to the whole man, will lead to frigid barrenness. Some have felt themselves to be in the freezing conditions of an arctic, spiritual wilderness, because everything is academic. Hence they have been susceptible to neo-experimentalism as a welcome change.

The way to obtain joy is always through the Scriptures, for the Scriptures alone set forth our union by faith with the Trinity. Union means fellowship with the Trinity and in the experience of this communion there is intense joy. 'These things write I unto you,' says John, 'that your joy might be full.' As we study the writings of the apostles, the truth of our salvation becomes clear and applicable to ourselves and others. In sharing the experience of this truth with others we have joy.

In the Gospel of John we find the subject of joy mentioned only once in the early chapters (John 3:29). However, in the discourses just prior to the crucifixion, our Lord speaks of the subject of joy over and over again. His concern is that his people should have true joy. He did not say to them, 'Let us work ourselves up into an emotional state.' Rather, he set clearly before them the truths which would be the foundation of their joy. The following practical means can be followed to obtain joy.

(i) Seek Joy by continuing in Christ's Love

Let us note again the instruction given in the upper room. 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandment, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full' (John 15:10, 11).

If you are to have true joy, it is fundamental that you keep the commandments. These commandments, of course, embrace all the precepts and sayings of Jesus — self-denial, loving one another, continuing in his word, etc. By walking in obedience before the Father you will experience his complacent love (John 14:23). By keeping the precepts of our Lord you will likewise abide in his love. Our Lord reminds us of these basic facts 'that your joy might be full'. But what does he mean by 'that my joy might remain in you'? Leon Morris, in his commentary on John, suggests that this joy is the joy of a finished work and is the joy of an inexhaustible power of fresh creation. Godet says that 'my joy' refers to a joy which our Lord himself feels in being the object of the

Father's love. John Brown, in his commentary on the discourses of our Lord, seems to have the root of the matter when he says, 'The original words equally admit of the rendering "that my joy in you might remain", as, "that my joy remain in you", and from the very form of expression, "my joy", and "your joy", there seems no reasonable doubt that our Lord announces two separate objects as the ends contemplated by him in his preceding statements and exhortations — that his joy in them might remain, and that their joy in him might abound; and that there are thus two closely connected, but still distinct, motives suggested by him, to wit, that by complying with his command they would minister to his enjoyment, and that by complying with his command they would advance their own happiness.'⁸

(ii) Seek Joy as you read, meditate and pray in private

Very often when we commence a time of devotion we feel empty and dry. The way to joy is not to jump into a pool of our own making, that is a pool of worked-up emotion. Rather the way to joy is through meditation on the truth.

The very fact that we have the Scriptures is a source of joy. 'I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches' (Ps. 119:14) and, 'I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil' (Ps. 119:162). If we are to see the glory of God it will not be apart from the Word since the assurance of our salvation as it comes from this glorious God is revealed in Scripture alone. 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels' (Is. 61 :10). Such passages as this remind us of the fact that it is the doctrine of justification that seals, settles and clarifies our salvation. Herein we have great joy. If the omnipotent One, who is holy and just, declares us to be righteous that is cause for joy indeed.

(iii) Seek Joy in the corporate worship of the Church

When David was cut off in the wilderness and separated from the sanctuary he recalled the place of worship as the place of great joy. 'I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday' (Ps. 42:4). The power and glory of God's presence is promised to those who faithfully gather according to the prescribed worship of the sanctuary. 'The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob' (Ps. 87:2). We can fully expect to experience the joy of the Lord in private and in our family worship, but much more are we to expect this joy as we worship together with God's people.

If, as the apostle Paul points out, it is a personal duty to rejoice always (Phil. 4:4) — how much more is it our duty to seek to regain the true joy of worship and attain that position where we sincerely regard the Lord's day as a delight (Is. 58:13).

⁸ *Discourses and Sayings of our Lord*. John Brown, vol. 3, p. 292.

If much has to be done to regain personal joy, much more the joy of corporate worship. How blessed will it be when God fulfils his promise to 'make them joyful in my house of prayer' (Is. 56:7). How happy when we can sing the following as a reality:

*Today on weary nations
The heavenly manna falls,
To holy convocations
The silver trumpet calls,
Where Gospel light is glowing
With pure and radiant beams,
And living water flowing
With soul refreshing streams.*

(iv) Seek Joy in the fellowship of God's people

In his second and third letters, the apostle John speaks of the great joy which he had in knowing that his children walked in the truth. 'I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth' (3 John 4). We can imagine the apostle's great happiness in hearing, either by letter or by messenger, of the spiritual well-being of those whom he dearly loved in the truth. This joy indicates the warmth and bond of fellowship that existed among the early disciples. To communicate by way of correspondence was a help to joy, but much greater was the joy of face-to-face communion. 'Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full' (2 John 12).

The reason why joy may be lacking among us today is that there is a lack of spiritual content in our conversation and fellowship. We have knowledge and experience to share which far transcend the knowledge of the world. J. W. Alexander wrote as follows: 'Think you any sensual pleasure ever equalled that of Archimedes when he hung over the theorem from which only death could tear him; or of Franklin, when he touched the pendant key, and gave the spark which opened a new world to science? Who can picture the transport of early philosophers, or enquiring Jews, when they first welcomed Christian revelations? The truths that are commonplace to us, were to them the very lights of heaven.'⁹ We have so much to share, but negligence so often deprives us of the joy of true spiritual communion with other believers.

These suggestions have been made by which we may obtain joy, but it is good to remember that the Holy Spirit is a person and not a machine. We are not to expect results as we would with mechanical appliances which respond to the pressing of buttons and the turning of switches. The Holy Spirit alone imparts true joy as he reveals the truth to us. In his infinite wisdom and knowledge he sovereignly bestows joy in his own time and way. Nevertheless, it is our responsibility always to seek joy, as John Howe well asserts it: 'Settle this persuasion in your hearts, that the serious, rational,

⁹ *Consolation* 1862. J. W. Alexander, p. 137.

regular, seasonable exercise of delight and joy is a matter of duty, to be charged upon conscience, from the authority of God and is an integral part in the religion of Christians.¹⁰

May the joy of the Lord, which is our strength, increasingly be experienced among us and be evident in our churches.

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¹⁰ Quoted from the 1962 Puritan Conference Papers, p. 28.