

EXPERIENCING the POWER of “ONE ACCORD”

“...they lifted up their voice to God with one accord...And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.” Acts 4:24, 31-33 (KJV)



This Week’s Thought – July 24, 2016

“Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1(b)-2 (NKJV)

Throughout the Bible, we learn that joy and pain sometimes go hand in hand. Or rather, we could say that it is through pain and trials that God brings about His plan for us and the world in which we live.

If you have pain or sorrow in your life, it doesn’t necessarily mean that you have done something wrong or that God is mad at you. Think of the question posed to Jesus in John 9:2: “Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” While this may have been the accepted wisdom of the day, how do you make sense of the cross?

The cross is the deepest injustice the world has ever seen and yet through the pain and suffering of God Himself we are given the gift of hope and peace. The cross was not forced upon Jesus or Him “getting what was coming to Him,” but was instead something He endured so that the joy of the resurrection might be known and experienced by those He loves.

Jesus knew the unsurpassed joy of the resurrection, and it was this hope that enabled Him to freely endure the suffering and pain of the cross. He had clarity of vision and Spirit-empowered determination. If we are to be true followers of Christ, we must have this same clarity and determination!

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We as His people must constantly be looking to see where Jesus is going and not let anything distract us from knowing Him and being made into His likeness. And in light of the cross, we must have this enduring spirit even when it is hard, even when it is painful, and even when it is costly.

As Paul reminds us in Philippians 3:10, his desire is to “*know Christ and the power of His resurrection, and to share His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death.*” Just as Jesus joyfully endured the pain of the cross, we too as His people are invited to know His life and joy, even in the midst of pain or trial. Be comforted today by the love of God shown on the cross and learn afresh from the Spirit how to find your joy in Him.

Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week: “I want you to experience the riches of your salvation: the Joy of being loved constantly and perfectly. You make a practice of judging yourself, based on how you look, behave or feel. If you like what you see in the mirror, you feel a bit more worthy of My Love. When things are going smoothly and your performance seems adequate, you find it easier to believe you are My beloved child. When you feel discouraged, you tend to look inward so you can correct whatever is wrong. Instead of trying to fix yourself, fix your gaze on Me, the Lover of your soul. Rather than using your energy to judge yourself, redirect it to praising Me.” (Ephesians 2:7-8; Hebrews 3:1; Psalm 34:5)

“And then God answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time.” Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King