

How to Have the Joy of God in the Last Days II

Fred R. Coulter—September 12, 2009

All of us want to be in the Kingdom of God. I look back how many ever many years it has been that we have been in the Church now, and since I've been baptized it's forty-nine years this coming October. After going through Ambassador College and graduating and getting married, Dolores and I were up in Boise. We went one day down to get some exercise down at the high school track. We were all happy and enthused, and that's when we thought Christ is going to return in 1975 and in 1972 we're going to a place of safety. So here we are in 1965 and we looked at each other and she looked at me and she said, 'Isn't it nice, we're not going to get old.' So here we are.

We all are looking forward to the resurrection, and a lot of us have been excited because we live in the last days. But looking at all the troubles that are going on in the last days and all the turmoil and all the troubles and fights and squabbles and difficulties that are taking place in the world and in the Church, the question is: How can you have joy, peace and love in such an atmosphere? It seems kind of contradictory. We're not going to stand up there and watch the Titanic sink and laugh, and say, 'Hooray, the Titanic is sinking.' No, that's not the kind of joy or peace or love that we're talking about.

Let's just repeat a couple of Scriptures here as we're starting. Let's come to Romans 8:28. This is the beginning of the perspective that we need. We can have joy and peace and love in these days though the world is falling apart all around us. That doesn't mean we're not aware of the suffering. That doesn't mean we're not aware of the difficulty. It just means that with God's Spirit we have a different perspective of those things, because we know the eventual outcome.

Romans 8:28: "And we know... [This is something we need to realize, to understand, to know, and **to know with conviction**. The reason that this is important because when we go through difficult times, we need to understand that these difficult times are for a purpose. Therefore, we can still have joy in those things which help perfect us for the Kingdom.] ...And we know that all things... [**All** means each and every thing. Just where it says there in 2-Tim. 3 that '**all** Scripture is God breathed.' That means *each and every Scripture* is God breathed. So this means each and every thing, whether pleasant or unpleasant, whether joyful or sorrowful] ...all work together for good... [We're going to see how that does and see how we can have

joy in the times that we are living. But notice, how does it all work together for good and to whom does it work together for good?] ...to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose."

Now, how are we to love God? Let's come to Mark 12. Let's see how it is that the love of God being the greatest; remember Paul said, 'There is faith and hope and love, and the greatest of these is love.' Because love will see us through all the difficulties and trials that we go through. Whereas, if you have fear and bitterness and hatred and resentment and grudges and a trauma, how can you have joy and how can things work out for good? Well, it's very difficult.

Mark 12:28: "And one of the scribes who had come up to *Him*, after hearing them reasoning together and perceiving that He [Jesus] answered them well, asked Him, 'Which is *the* first commandment of all?' Then Jesus answered him, '*The* first of all the commandments *is*, "Hear, O Israel, Our one God is *the* Lord, *the* Lord.... [Now you can read the appendix concerning that, because that's the Truth of the Bible. The Bible reveals Elohim God, which is a plural noun has two Lords. That is correct according to the Greek, correct according to the Hebrew.] ...And **you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength**""' (vs 28-30).

This tells us that it is an all out commitment to God—endeavor. There can't be anything greater. Let's ask a question: Did Jesus love God with all His heart and mind and soul and being when He was in the flesh? *Absolutely, He did!* We'll see something about that in just a little bit here.

"This is *the* first commandment. And *the* second *is* like this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these"" (vs 30-31). Now Jesus later said, 'A new commandment I give you,' which comes right after the one of loving God. 'You're to love each other as **I** have loved you.' Would that would be in the Church of God. We've had so many things and difficulties come along that that's very difficult, especially when we've been hit right and left with false prophets and false doctrines and false prophecies, and arrogance and robbing and stealing and all of those things. But, however, God promises it will work together for good. And what is the good that we have out of it? We don't do those things. Is that good? *Yes!*

So whenever we go through the difficulties, we need to do this: **Remember the lesson, but don't relive the trauma.** That's what Paul did. He remembered he persecuted the Church, but he didn't relive the trauma. And too many times we relive the trauma. When you do, just stop and ask yourself:

- 'Can I change what has happened?
- Is that going to make things better?
- Is that going to make me better?

Or should we not just put it in God's hands and say, 'God, here it is. It's Yours.' *Yes!*

Let's come to John 15, because the other part of that: 'and those who are called according to His purpose.' Here's something we need to understand. This also helps us to love God even more, but it also helps us to be humble. It also helps us to realize that in this physical world in which we live, **we don't have anything that we didn't receive.** Think about it! What is there that we have or do or are involved in that God has not provided? *Yes, we meet in this building; we live in our homes.* God has provided what? *Everything to make it possible.* All the raw materials. He's created many men and women to produce and made so these things can be brought together and build a house. All comes from God. Many times the things that come from God, He also uses other people to send it to us. So there we have it.

Now let's understand about 'called according to His purpose.' Let's come to John 15:13: "No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends.... [He's talking about Himself in relationship to them and also in relationship to the whole world.] ...You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you" (vs 13-14). Now I mentioned, I think it was last time, that it would be an interesting study—someone who has a good, fast computer—go through all four of the Gospels and list out all the commandments that Jesus gave us. Then remember what Jesus said, 'If you love Me, keep the commandments,' and the Greek is very emphatic there, 'namely My commandments.' We'll just ask the question: What are all the commandments of Jesus Christ? We all know the Ten Commandments and we all know that He was the Lord God of the Old Testament before He became Jesus Christ of the New, God manifested in the flesh. He spoke the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. So those are His commandments, too—are they not? And where did He get His commandments? *From the Father.*

Now notice v 15: "No longer do I call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you all *the* things that I heard from My Father.... [Now we've got it

recorded for us. We don't have to go someplace to hear Jesus, because we can't hear Him anyway. But we can hear Him through the words which have been preserved for us. Now notice v 16. This becomes very important in everything that we're related to back in Rom. 8:28.] ...You yourselves... [That means you of your own volition, meaning you of your own what you might think inherent goodness, because there is no goodness in anyone. But people think that they are good.] ...you yourselves did not choose Me, but I have personally chosen you..." (vs 15-16). Now why did I translate this *personally*? The verb in the Greek for *chosen* is what is called the middle-voice verb and it functions this way: It's much like a reflexive verb, which is *you do something for yourself*. So in trying to figure out how you apply the middle-voice verb to what Jesus said here, since He's called us for Himself, but He *personally* has chosen us. Think of that! That's why 'many are called, but few are chosen'; because few repent. The Father first has to draw us and that's the point in your life when all of a sudden things began to change and you wanted to know about God. Now why did that happen? *Because the Father was drawing you.*

It could have been you were in a trial, it could have been whatever. I know in my case I was going to the college of San Mateo at that time and our paleontology teacher, the first day in class, where they teach evolution and all of this sort of thing—paleontology is geology, biology, and archeology. So we all got in the classroom. This is vivid in my mind. I can see it just like I'm sitting in the chair. There were 400 students and the seats go back at an angle and it goes up pretty high, and he's standing there on a little stage down there. I was about 20 rows back and had a good view of it. The stage was about a foot high and he was standing there, waiting for the students to quit talking. So the bell rang and some students quit talking, but they kept talking so he just stood there, waited. Finally it got quiet. And the first words out his mouth were, 'If you believe in God and the Bible do not bring it up in this class or there is the door.'

I said to myself, 'How dare he do that.' I wasn't religious. I didn't go to Sunday school or anything like that. I didn't even have a Bible. I knew nothing of God, but I didn't disbelieve God and I thought that's outrageous that he would say so. Well, shortly after that I heard the World Tomorrow program and one thing led to another, and that's how God called me. That's how He personally selected me. How did He personally select you? Now it may be through a relative, may be through a parent, it may be through other circumstances, but nevertheless, God has chosen you—and for what? *The greatest purpose and the greatest inheritance possible.*

So you have to love God and be called according to His purpose. Now He says, "...I have personally chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go *forth* and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain... [And yes, it does—doesn't it? We have the fruit of their work right here. That's in addition to all the people that were called and converted and everything that we know about and don't know about.] (Now notice): ...so that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you" (v 16). So remember that. ***Never cease praying when there is something to pray about that has not yet been answered.*** Isn't that a vain repetition? *No*, there are *needful* repetitions and there are *vain* repetitions. So you keep praying. Remember the parable of the widow who kept coming to the judge? Remember what Jesus said, 'Ask and keep on asking and you shall receive,' etc.

"...whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you" (v 16). That means:

- we must know the Word of God
- we must know the Truth of God
- we must make our prayers in accord with the will of God
- we must be humble
- we must yield to God

—and all of those things are all implied here.

He says, "These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you.... [So keep that in mind when tougher times come down the road. When they come after us with things like that, ask God for strength and help and peace of mind, and He will give it.] ...If you were of the world, the world would love its own. However, because you are not of the world, but I have personally chosen you out of the world, the world hates you for this" (vs 17-19). You can see that in various things in your life, and so forth.

Now let's look at one more Scripture: Hebrews 12, and let's see Jesus' example for us. Here is what is going to bring the joy, the peace, and the love in difficult times. After summarizing in the faith chapter all of those who lived by faith, always remember this: ***faith requires obedience.***

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight... [Now what is a weight? *That's a problem.* Every felt burdened down? Have you ever felt depressed? *That is burdened down, that is a weight.* What you need to do is take those to God and let God take them from you. And be persistent in that until God lifts the weight from you.] ...and the sin that so easily entraps *us*; and let us run the race set before us with endurance....

[Because the one who endures to the end shall be saved.] ...Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus... [That is the key. Looking to Him for everything.] ...the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross..." (vs 1-2). [Why? Because He knew that going through this ordeal would ensure that there would be billions and billions of sons and daughters in the Kingdom of God, and that the plan of God would succeed. But He had to go through this first, as the perfect sacrifice for the sin of the world.

"...although He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand on the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds" (vs 2-3).

So what are we talking about here? *We are talking about spiritual and mental strength*, which can only come from a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. It can't come any other way. You're not going to find it in the world. You're not going to find it in things. You're not going to find it in other people unless they are fellow Christians who are praying for you and you are praying for them; and you are loving them and they are loving you. Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of losing blood in your struggle against sin."

Now let's look at another thing that is right along that line. Let's come to James, the first chapter. Of course, James was the half brother of Jesus. Let's see what he says about the circumstances in life. Remember what we covered last time: Jesus said, 'Be courageous. In the world you will have tribulation, but I have overcome the world,' and so can you overcome the world through Christ.

James 1:1: "James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings!" A little sidebar here: Would you write a letter to someone that you didn't know where they were? And if he's writing to the twelve tribes, does that not mean that there were many copies sent out to wherever the twelve tribes were? *Of course.* What does this tell us? *The twelve tribes were not lost.* They were just scattered.

Now here's how he starts out: "**Consider it all joy**, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials..."

- trials are difficult
- trials come through other people
- trials come through circumstances
- trials come because of our own stupidity

I've had plenty of those.

There's a man who recently was cutting down some limbs from a tree and when he put up the ladder, he knew that it really wasn't where it should have been, but he figured, 'Well, I can do it anyway.' So he got up there and he had his little chain saw and he was cutting down the limbs and utt-oh, the ladder slipped out. So here he's falling to the ground after cutting some great big limb and he had experience in skiing, so he knew how to fall and land without hurting himself. So as he was coming down, he planned his landing. You can do this in just a flash of a second, but when something happens like that it seems like everything is in slow motion. I know it was when I rolled my Isuzu. It just went ohhhh, crash!! So he threw away the chain saw so it wouldn't get to him, he fell to the ground, and then BANG! all of a sudden that big limb came down and hit his leg and hit his arm, and broke his arm and broke his leg. He didn't have much joy when that happened. However, after thinking the whole thing through and thanking God that he was still alive, there was joy that God:

1. spared his life
2. could heal his leg
3. he's going to be fine

So there you go. "Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials, Knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.... [We're tested all the time—correct? *Yes!*] ...But let endurance have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything" (vs 2-4).

Let's see how we can apply this now. Let's come back to Isaiah 26. It's not in the same place that it was in the *King James*. It's back closer to the front of the Bible. Isaiah 26:1: "In that day this song shall be sung in the land of Judah: 'We have a strong city; He [God] sets up salvation *as our* walls and banks. Open the gates, so that the righteous nation shall enter in, one that is faithfully keeping Truth.... [These are the resurrected ones—are they not? *Yes, indeed!*] (v 3, here's a promise): ...You will keep *him* in perfect peace, whose mind *is* stayed on You... [That means peace of mind, and peace of mind is the first step to joy.] ...because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever; for God the LORD *is* the everlasting Rock, for He brings down those who dwell on high... [So don't worry about them.] ...He lays low the lofty city... [So God will bring His judgment.] ...He lays it low, even to the ground; He brings it *even* to the dust" (vs 1-5) and so forth.

So God is going to have the judgment. But the thing that is important here: '***you keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You.***' That's exactly what it says in Heb. 12, 'having your minds fixed on Jesus.'

Now let's look at another one here as we go along. We have quite a few other Scriptures to cover. Let's come back to the book of Psalms 16. In the *Original Order Bible*, you go forward from Isaiah, not backward. Let's again see how these things apply. Let's see how we can use these things in our lives. Because after all, what are we dealing with between joy and sorrow? *Circumstances and mental attitude*—correct? *Yes, indeed!* Let's see how it's applied here. Some of these verses are a direct prophecy of Jesus Christ. So let's apply it to ourselves.

Psalm 16:1: "Preserve me, O God, for in You do I put my trust.... ['Perfect peace have those who trust in the Lord.'] ...I have said to the LORD, 'You are my LORD... [Have you ever told God that? 'You are my Lord, You are my Savior, You are my God.']] ...***I have no goodness apart from You***.... [That's quite a statement— isn't it? Isn't that true? *Yes!* Then it gets back to ***we have nothing we didn't receive.***] ...As for the saints in the earth... [Here's how God looks at us. That doesn't mean we don't have problems we need to overcome. That doesn't mean we don't have things we need to repent of.] (but here is how God looks at us): ...As for the saints in the earth, 'They are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight'" (vs 1-3).

Now think on that. Does God delight in you? *Yes! That's why He called you.* Can we do the things that please Him? *Yes! if we love Him and keep His commandments*—correct? *Yes, we can.* His delight is in His people, because He personally has called us. So use that as a point of joy and peace. Remember Jesus said, 'My peace I give to you—not as the world gives it, I give to you.' Because having our minds fixed on Christ, we are in perfect peace, and ***when we have peace of mind we can have joy in spite of the circumstances.*** Now that doesn't mean we become haughty and laugh at difficulties and problems. It just means we have

- an inner peace
- an inner joy
- an inner courage
- an inner determination and endurance to do what is right

—because we 'know that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.'

Verse 4: "Their sorrows shall be multiplied who run after another god. I will not pour out their drink offerings of blood; and I will not take their names upon my lips. The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup; You shall uphold my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a beautiful inheritance" (vs 4-6). Now think about it a minute. What is it going to be like to

have a spirit body? to live forever? to have glory? What is it going to be like, ultimately, when New Jerusalem comes to the earth? and we live in New Jerusalem and we see God the Father and Jesus Christ and all the saints on a daily basis? *‘Perfect peace have those whose minds are stayed on the Lord.’* That’s how we do it.

“I will bless the LORD Who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the nights.... [And many times, I don’t know about you, but many times I learn things when I wake up at night and lie there praying, thinking about the Word of God, thinking about things. I have to in the same that you do. When there are difficulties and problems that come along, when there are aggravations and troubles that spring up, I also have to say, ‘God, give me the understanding how I can handle this. Help me to understand it and keep it in perspective. Don’t let it drag me down. Don’t let it become a weight. Don’t let me dwell on it so that I am thinking things that I ought not think.’ That’s what we have to do.] (Here’s how he does it): ...I have set the LORD always before Me because He is at My right hand, I shall not be moved.... [He is the Rock. We are anchored into Him. We have the promises of God as the anchor of the soul, as Paul wrote in the book of Hebrews.] ...Therefore My heart is glad... [Meaning you have joy.] ...and My glory rejoices; My flesh also shall rest in hope.” (vs 7-9). There are going to be many saints because we’ve got a lot of seniors, and I’m one of them, never thought I would be, but I’m one of them.

And we just have an article about one lady who’s a sister in the Church back in Maine and she just turned 99—Ethel McMillan. That’s exactly how she has kept herself all these years, by doing exactly what I’ve said here. And I know because I know her and I have been with her every year when I go back to Manchester, New Hampshire. As a matter of fact, most of the time when I’m there, she’s sitting on the front row. And I can tell you this, she’s got a Bible with little teeny print and she can read it. She wears glasses. When different ones would get up and speak and I would sit down and we’d have hymns and things like that, I’d sit down next to her and come time to sing hymns, we’d sing loud and clear. I don’t know if she’s going to live another five, ten or fifteen years, but who knows. But look at the attitude and things that she had to have, not only the inheritance and everything, but continually looking to God can overcome all of the difficulties of this physical life.

Let’s read that again. “Therefore My heart is glad, and My glory rejoices; My flesh also shall rest in hope, for You will not abandon My soul to the grave; neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will make known to Me the path of

life... [Think of that. The way to walk, the path that leads to eternal life. What did Jesus say? He said, ‘I am *the way, the truth, and the life.*’ That’s what David was talking about here.] ...**in Your presence is fullness of joy**.... [See, that’s why we have to always keep looking ahead, always keep looking to the goal that is set before us. Does that mean we neglect the things that are around us physically that are happening? *No!* But what does it do? *It gives us a better perspective in handling those things.*] ...At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (vs 9-11).

So just think what it’s going to be like to be in the Kingdom of God. That’s going to be some deal. Look at what God has done with us. We’ve gone through Psa. 139, how we’re ‘fearfully and wonderfully made, and the Spirit of God has made us,’ and so forth. We know that each one of us have a genetic code. God is going to use that to resurrect us. Jesus said, ‘Every hair is numbered.’ Now we used to think that had to do with the number of hairs and those who do not have much on the top may have felt slighted. However, I’ve come to a different conclusion. Every hair has your genetic code, as does every cell, every drop of fluid in your body, and even your bones. *You are distinctively created*, made in the image of God, by the Spirit of God, through the process of procreation. Everything about you God has made.

Let’s come to Psalm 27. Here’s another thing we need to do. I know this: that if you don’t pray on your knees every day, and if you don’t study every day, then things will come upon you in a way and you will not be spiritually armed to be able to handle them. So they will cause you more problems. So notice how this is again. I want you to see how in every case that we’re talking about joy, and every case that we’re talking about difficulties that we go through—what is the mindset? because that’s the important thing.

Psalm 27:1: “The LORD is my light.... [Jesus said, ‘I am the Light of the world’—right? What did He say of us? *We’re the light of the world*—is that not true? Sometimes I think about that, the condition of the Churches of God, and I think, ‘Oh, God, help us!’ Sometimes we are the bane of the world.] ...The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?... [We’re not to be afraid. We’re not to go around cocky and like a smart-aleck boxer, ‘I’m the greatest.’ No! We’re not to fear anything or any one! And another thing, too, while teaching the proper fear of God, no church should be run by fear and intimidation. God does not want that.] ...The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Nothing! No circumstance in the world!

Now hold your place here and let's come to Psalm 91. As I mentioned before, we have to go to Psalm 91 a lot to be able to have peace of mind in the last days and be able to have joy. Because we're going to be confronted with circumstances sooner or later that are going to be greater than we have ever imagined.

Let me ask you a question: How would you like to live in Mexico right now, in the middle of the drug wars, with the army fighting the gangs of those people who are ruthless and evil? No one wants to be a policeman in Mexico anymore because the gangs will come and shoot you and your family. They have murdered—this is not counting casualties in war—in Mexico because of these drug wars, 6,000 people. Now those things are fearful and coming upon them. Now what if the United States gets to a degenerate condition like that? What's going to happen? What if it's where you are in your country? We have brethren in Mexico. I've talked to them. They rely on:

Psalm 91:1: "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High... [We'll talk about that a little later on. We are dwelling by having the Holy Spirit of God, we are in the secret place of the Most High.] ...shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Now you can see a shadow on the ground. Say you're standing right next to a tree or a building and maybe you're even standing in the shadow of the building, and you can look out and see where the shadow ends, but as you look straight ahead, you can't see the shadow—*same way with God's protection*. It's there, but you can't see it. The angels are there, and unless there's a purpose of them to manifest themselves to you, you don't know they're there. But sometimes you go through something, and you know an angel had to be there to keep you from greater trouble than happened, right? *Yes, indeed!*

(go to the next track)

We're here in Psalm 91:2: "I will say of the LORD, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Whom I will trust.'" And this has to be our whole attitude. Notice with that attitude: does God love us? *Yes!* Does God watch over us? *Yes!* Are His angels there to help protect us? *Yes!* Now when it comes time to be a martyr, then He's going to give us strength. And when we're martyred, we're going to be resurrected shortly after that anyway—so what's the difference? But notice this, here are the promises. What I suggest you do is take some time in prayer, and open your Bible to this place, and read the verses and pray about it, and think about it, and ask God to help you have this same kind of attitude. Lots of times we'll come along and say, 'Oh, I need to pray. What do I need to pray about?' Everything in the world So that's why we have the

Psalms. Open the Psalms. Start here in Psalm 91, especially if you have a trial you're going through.

Verse 3: "Surely He will deliver you from the fowler's trap and from the destroying pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers... [That means God's protection.] ...and under His wings you shall trust.... [Remember what God told Israel? He said when they finally made it to Mount Sinai, 'I bore you on eagle's wings.' No, they walked, so this is symbolic of His protection.] ...under His wings you shall trust. **His Truth shall be your shield and buckler**.... [Now just put in your margin there Eph. 2:12. We are to be 'girded about with truth.'] ...His Truth shall be your shield and buckler" (vs 3-4). And His Word is the Truth, we are sanctified by the Truth, we are sanctified by His Word, etc. Now

Verse 5: "You shall not be afraid of the terror by night... [Are we living in a age of terror today? *Yes, indeed!* Although, the administration today doesn't like to call it the war on terror—an *overseas contingency*.] ...nor for the arrow that flies by day... [Now that's right in the thick of the battle—right?] ...Nor for the plague that walks in darkness..." (vs 5-6).

You have to do your part. You keep clean, you keep your house clean, everything like that. You can't live in a rat-infested hole and expect God to keep you from a plague. You keep it clean and nice, and get rid of the rats. Although I don't know if it's going to be lawful to do that down the road here the way that they're getting all of these idiots and kooks and PETA people running the government. One of them said that animals ought to have rights and be entitled to an attorney in court; and that you can't kill rats. Well, that comes straight from Hinduism. They have a temple to the rat god, and it's just absolutely overloaded with thousands and thousands of rats. So if you watch the History Channel or National Geographic Channel, watch that sometime. And all the people stupidly come there, puts their hands together, and bow down to the rats, and throw them their offerings of food. Isn't that lovely? *No!* He's going to keep you from the plague and the destruction that lays waste.

Now here's another promise. And I will read part of that book before next time, *A Thousand Shall Fall*, because it's taken from this. "...A thousand shall fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand; it shall not come near you.... [It shall not come near you, close miss. But a miss is as good as a mile—right? *Yes, indeed!*] ...Only with your eyes you shall behold and see the recompense of the wicked" (vs 5-8). Now what is the ultimate fulfillment of this verse, v 8? *Lake of fire*, that's one. *Seven last plagues* when we're all on the Sea of Glass looking down at the earth as the angels pour them out. Here's why:

“Because you have made the LORD, Who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation... [Now think about that for a minute. What is one of the meanings of the Feast of Tabernacles? *God dwelling with His people*. But what are we in the New Testament? *Every one of us is a mini-temple of God because the Spirit of God is dwelling in us*. We have ‘made the Lord, the Most High our habitation.’] ...no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling...” (vs 9-10).

Now when things start getting bad, take out this Bible, open it up here to Psalm 91, and pray about it. Ask for God’s help, ask for God’s protection, ask for God’s deliverance, and also, ‘Please help me to be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove,’ and to take care of the things that you need to take care of all the while you’re trusting in God.

Now here’s the one Satan quoted when he was tempting Jesus, v 11: “For He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways.... [*If you do what God says*, not *if* you tempt God.] ...They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and asp; the young lion and the jackal you shall trample underfoot” (vs 11-13). Now this is symbolic language of destroying the enemy. Who is the greatest lion that is going to be put away by God? *Satan the devil* is a ‘roaring lion going about seeking whom he may devour’—correct? And the young lion—what are those? *Those are the demons*. And the jackal? *Those are the worst of the demons*.

Now notice, v 14: “Because he set his love upon Me... [Because you love God. That’s where we started—right? *Yes! Loving God with all your heart and mind and soul and being*.] ...therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; **I will be with him in trouble**... [To help you to bring you out of it. Also, having the Spirit of God in us—right? He is with us in all our trouble, in all aspects of our life. And that in itself is comforting, brings peace of mind, which can bring joy.] ...**I will deliver him, and honor him**” (vs 14-15).

And the ultimate deliverance is from death. That’s why He told John when John saw the vision of Christ in His glory there in Rev. 1, He said, ‘I have the keys of the grave and death’—having conquered death! Death is meaningless as far as God fulfilling His plan. He’s going to take care of it. “With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation” (v 16). Now this is going to be long life—how about living forever? Is that long enough for you? Think about that.

Now let’s come back here to Psalm 27, and here again we will see about the secret place of God. The world can’t see it, just you can’t see His shadow. There are angels about us all the time. We can’t see them. We don’t know they’re there, but they are there. And I know when I rolled my Isuzu, I know that an angel had to be there to protect me, because I was driving at 75 miles an hour and rolled that Isuzu and it took one long, long roll and landed right up on the four wheels, and I didn’t have my seat belt on. When it was going over I said, ‘Oh, no!’ As soon as it landed, I opened the door and got out and I said, ‘God, thank you for saving me from my stupidity.’ I always remember the place, but I don’t go through the agony of it when I go down to L.A. I know within one mile where I rolled it. Every time I go by I tell myself, ‘Fred, don’t do anything stupid.’

Psalm 27:1: “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, my enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell” (vs 1-2). And I’ve seen that with people who’ve come after me with tong and fork and every evil thing and lying tongues. God took care of them.

“Though an army should encamp against me... [Now how’s the odds on that? Ten thousand to one?] ...my heart shall not be afraid; though war should rise against me, even then I will be confident.... [Why?] ...One thing I have desired from the LORD, that I will seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple.... [Doesn’t that sound like Christ having His mind fixed? *Yes, same thing*.] ...For in the time of trouble **He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the secret place of His tabernacle** He shall hide me...” (vs 3-5).

Now come over here to Psalm 31:19: “Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who take refuge in You before the sons of men!” What did Jesus tell the disciples there in John 14? ‘*You believe in God, believe also in Me*. I go to prepare a place for you, to receive you unto Myself, so that where I am you may also be.’ He’s preparing a place for us.

Verse 20: “You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence... [That is with God’s Spirit.] ...from the plottings of man; You shall hide them in a shelter away from the strife of tongues.... [So we need to eliminate that in the Church as well.] ...Blessed is the LORD, for He has shown His wondrous lovingkindness in a besieged city, for I said in my haste, ‘I am cut off from before Your

eyes;’ nevertheless You heard the voice of my supplications when I cried to You.... [So here’s the joy of what he has after that.] ...O love the LORD, all you His saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, and fully repays the proud doer. Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the LORD” (vs 20-24).

Now let’s come back here to Psalm 27:6: “And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies round about me; therefore I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy in His tabernacle... [So the joy is there in a tremendous way.] ...I will sing... [That’s one way we can have joy.] ...yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice; and be gracious unto me and answer me.... [Then here’s sort of a conversation between David and God]: ...When You said, ‘Seek My face,’ my heart said to You, ‘Your face, O LORD, will I seek’” (vs 6-8). And that ties right in with what Jesus said, ‘Seek and you shall find,’ and so forth.

Let’s come over here to Psalm 33. Now just think of this: God is so great that what did He do? He put David through every one of these experiences, not only so that he would be perfected, but to write these Psalms so we can have them, and also God wove in these Psalms the prophecies of Christ and even some of the thoughts that He had. So we can have them, so we can be comforted, so we can have joy, so we can have peace. Remember, ‘perfect peace have all they whose minds are fixed on You.’

Psalm 33:1: “Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous ones; praise is becoming for the upright.” So when you pray:

- Rejoice before God.
- Thank Him for everything.
- Praise Him for His goodness.
- Praise Him for His mercy.
- Praise Him for His graciousness.
- Praise Him for the forgiveness of your sins.

“Praise the LORD with lyre... [I don’t know how to play one of those, but I can sing songs in my head. I can’t play a guitar and I can’t play a piano, but I do like music.] ...sing unto Him with a harp of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song... [Now think what it’s going to be when we’re resurrected and we sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. I don’t know what’s going to happen, I don’t know if the angels are going to pass out the equivalent of sheet music and say, ‘Okay, we’ve got the angelic orchestra over here, and we’re all going to sing these songs. When the music starts, we’re going to sing the song of Moses.’ *I don’t know it.* ‘Don’t worry about it, you’ll catch on real quickly.’ {Can}

you imagine what that’s going to be like? For those who make a joyful noise in those days, you will sing.] (But notice, you can still make joyful shouts): ...for the Word of the LORD is upright; and all His works are *done* in faithfulness” (vs 2-4).

Just think of that. Everything you go through God is faithful with you, and you return and be faithful with Him. He gives you of His Spirit, He gives you of His peace, and you have joy, even though things on the outside may not be that way. What’ll happen then, good things will come along and you can be joyful in those good things. If something comes along that is not a good thing, well then you can look and see what the solution is and realize that ‘all things work together for good for those that love God and are called according to His purpose.’ It will work out.

Let’s continue on, v 5. God loves you, but also: “He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD. By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together like a heap, putting the depths in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him” (vs 5-8). So this is a tremendous thing.

Come down here to v 12: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, and the people He has chosen for His own inheritance.... [And where did we start? *Christ has personally chosen us.*] ...The LORD looks down from heaven; He beholds all the sons of men.... [So even though God is there, because men didn’t want God around, because they said, ‘Oh, God, get out of my life. I don’t want you around.’ He says, ‘Okay, that’s your choice.’ But He still knows everything that goes on.] ...From His dwelling place He looks intently upon all the inhabitants of the earth. Together He fashions their hearts alike; He considers all their works” (vs 12-15). All right, you can read the rest of it; there’s a lot there to read.

Let’s come over here to Psalm 43. What we’re doing in learning *how to have joy in difficult times*, we’re also seeing

- how to keep our minds fixed on Christ
- keep our minds fixed on the Word of God
- how to use the Psalms in our prayers
- how to trust God
- how to love Him
- how to look at things from the perspective of how God looks at them.

So when you’re in trouble, ask God to intervene.

Psalm 43:1: “Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation. Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man... [Now think

about this: a lot of people say, ‘Oh, we wish the Church were as large as it used to be and everybody all together.’ Well, what was it filled with? *They had a lot*, and in the leadership, *deceitful and unjust men*. Consider this: The scattering of the Church has what? *Delivered you from deceitful and unjust men*. Be thankful! Be happy! Don’t be interested in numbers. **God is interested in conversion**. Don’t be interested in socializing with people, because you’ve been with them for years in the Church. And by doing so you compromised the love of God and the Truth of God. *No!* Those things become idols before God. Put those away. We’ve been delivered.] ...for You are the God of my strength; why do You cast me off?... [Here he’s going through a trial.] ...Why do I go mourning under the affliction of the enemy? (vs 1-2).

So what does he do? He looks to God, looks to Christ, and he says: “Oh, send out Your Light and Your Truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to Your Holy hill and to Your tabernacles.... [‘Let this trial give me the strength to come to You, O God.’] ...Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy... [Because you’re looking at the end of it—right? *Yes!*] ...yea, upon the lyre I will praise You, O God, my God” (vs 3-4). So that’s how he encouraged himself.

Let’s look at some more Psalms and then we’ll look at some things in the New Testament. Let’s come to Psalm 126. A nice short Psalm, but this is really good when you understand the joy that you can have when God delivers you from a trial. Now would you say that if you were in exile because of the sins that your forefathers had done—and this is a Psalm of the Jews who came back out of Babylon. While it was their fathers that did the sinning and they happened to be born in Babylon, they were the servants and they were the oppressed, and all of that. Now here’s how they felt when they came back. This was undoubtedly under the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Psalm 126:1: “When the LORD brought back the exiles, those who returned to Zion, we were like those who dream... [Is this real? You know what you say when you go through an experience? ‘Let me pinch myself, is this really happening?’ *Yes!*] ...Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then they said among the nations, ‘The LORD has done great things with them’” (vs 1-2). Now let’s amplify that to the resurrection. What are the people going to say when they see all the resurrected glorified sons and daughters of God? ‘God has done great things for us, and we are glad.’

“Turn back our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.... [And I love this verse]: ...Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.... [So

what’s it going to be like at the resurrection with the joy of the resurrection?] ...He who goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come home with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (vs 4-6). Now that’s much like Matt. 13 and Mark 4 about the seeds that are planted, bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundredfold. And the one bringing the sheaves is Christ.

Let’s come back to Psalm 105. So **all of these things show us how to have glory and joy and peace of mind, and satisfaction in the last days** when on many sides there’s fear, there’s trouble, there’s stress, there’s difficulty. Another thing, too, if you have a lot of stress—I’ve asked some people, ‘Well, how much television do you watch?’ And they said, ‘Too much.’ Well, turn it off, maybe that will help end the stress.

Psalm 105:1—here again we’re approaching God: “O give thanks unto the LORD! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the people.... [This is exactly what the book of Psalms is all about, and the Bible what it’s all about. What do the Gospels show us? *They show us all the deeds and words and teachings of Jesus Christ*—right? What do we have with the Epistles? How to grow in character, in grace and knowledge, and how to face the difficulties that we are confronted with.] ...Sing to Him, sing praises unto Him; talk of all His wonderful works. Glory in His Holy name; let the heart of those who seek the LORD rejoice.... [Here’s how you do it.]: ...Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face evermore” (vs 1-4).

So if you’re glum, if you’re down at the mouth, if you’ve had difficulties and trials and you think nothing is right, or if you’ve got *ants*. Now what are ants? We’ve had some crawling around out kitchen and the strangest thing is, we can’t find the trail, yet they have been showing up, some cases a few, some cases a lot. One day the counter was black with ants. So I’m not talking about that. I’m talking about **mentally automatic negative thoughts—ants**. Look at this, this is all positive here. Take Psalm 91. What if someone, all those circumstances, and they have ants? Ants in the brain: *automatic negative thoughts*. ‘Oh, God, why am I out here with all these troubles. Oh, God, look at this. All those people are dying. It’s terrible! The plague is out here! Oh, God, how could you love people, how could these things happen? God, I can’t love you if you’re a God Who does this.’ **Automatic negative thoughts**. That’s the way the world is—right?

They go out and do all these things that they do, and still they haven’t solved the problem of abortion and that’s the number one thing in the United States of America today. We’re supposed to be a nation founded on the Word of God, yet we kill

the most innocent in the womb. And I've got a report at home that shows the actual pictures of some of these babies and what they really look like, and let me tell you, I can hardly look at those pictures. But ***I can take hope in the fact that God is in charge and He's going to resurrect them.*** But in the meantime, He's going to be punishing this nation for allowing that kind of hateful murder of the innocent who have not even been fully formed to interrupt the handiwork of God in the womb in creating another human being; to abort that child.

So we need to really look to God. He's going to solve it. But the world is still going to be judged, and those people are going to be held responsible. So always remember His wonderful works. One thing that they have put out in addition to all the problems and difficulties that we have on television, and so forth, God has inspired that there are some really good things. There's some things about the universe, the solar system, the earth. There's a whole series on the earth, the planet earth. It shows some of the most astounding things. When I see some of those things, I think, 'Oh, God, look, You made all of this!' It showed a picture of about 3-million of the arctic geese flying back to the arctic. It was a picture you couldn't believe. Then it showed all the caribou and it showed the geese where they landed and as soon as they land, they mate, pick a place for the nest, and then they fight off each other so they have their space and territory. I thought, that's fantastic!

Then it shows some things in the ocean of the fish and the sharks and the whales and the little teeny fish. It shows that down six thousand feet to the bottom of the ocean there is life, right next to those sulfur methyl vents that are down there. ***All to the glory of God!*** So there are some good things that we can watch and encourage. And remember this, we're going to help save this world. That's what I wrote in my last letter. ***We are the hope of the world*** and that ought to give us a great deal of joy. Look at the frustration that all these people are going through to try and solve spiritual problems by political means, by changing the government. You aren't going to change the government. Isa.1 says that they are sick from the top of their head to the sole of their feet with wounds and bruises and putrefying sores and no one can fix it. But God can!—and we will help Him. So always keep that in mind.

“Glory in His Holy name; let the heart of those who seek the LORD rejoice. Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face evermore. Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, O you seed of Abraham His servant, you children of Jacob His chosen. He is the LORD our God; His

judgments are in all the earth.... [Now apply that to us, because if you are Christ's, then—what? '*You are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise,*' (Gal. 3:29)—right?] ...He has remembered His covenant forever... [And we are in the covenant of eternal life. That should bring us great joy and great hope and great inner peace.] ...the word which He commanded to a thousand generations; the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac..." (vs 3-9). And we are as Isaac, ***the children of promise.***

Now let's come to the New Testament, and let's look at several Scriptures here that we need to understand, see how we are to live and how to do these things. Let's come to Romans 5. Now there are many others. We can't go through the whole thing. I could probably give a half a dozen sermons on joy and all of that, but we won't go through that at the present time. So let's tie it all together.

Romans 5:1: “Therefore... [And that's in the light of the fact that Christ was raised from the dead to deliver us from our offences.] ...having been justified by faith...

- because we believe God
- we believe what He did
- we believe His promises
- we believe His Word.

...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” ***Perfect peace have those whose minds are stayed on the Lord.*** We have peace with God. If you have peace with God, it doesn't matter what's going on around you. That's not to say become detached and become a stoic. That means that with the Spirit of God, with the strength of God, don't let those things rob you of the joy which can come from God in spite of those things.

Verse 2: “Through Whom we also have access by faith unto this grace... [Great access to God.] ...in which we stand... [That's just like an umbrella that covers us. And from this comes:

- the *love* of God
- the *hope* of God
- the *peace* of God
- the *joy* of God
- the *fruits* of the Spirit:
 - ✓ love
 - ✓ joy
 - ✓ peace
 - ✓ longsuffering
 - ✓ kindness
 - ✓ goodness
 - ✓ meekness
 - ✓ self control.

...in which we stand, and we ourselves boast.... [Boast means, and it can be *have joy*.] ...in *the* hope of the glory of God.” Just think of that! What could give you more joy than anything else? *The glory of God, being made a glorious son and daughter of God*. Nothing can give you greater joy than that.

“...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God.... [And because of that, here’s how we look at circumstances around us—because we know what? ***All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.***] ...And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations... [I haven’t quite come to that, but I’m nudging a little closer.] ...realizing... [Why?] ...realizing that ***tribulation brings forth endurance***... [And what does the Proverb say? ‘If you faint in the day of adversity, you are of little strength.’ Of course we’re not to faint, we’re to have endurance. And that’s why these things come along.] ...and ***endurance brings forth character***... [Because God is instilling in you through all of these things

- His character
- His mind
- His thoughts
- His way

—because we are His workmanship.] ...and ***character brings forth hope***. And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us” (vs 2-5).

So this is the attitude that we need to have. ***This is how we can have joy in the last days*** regardless of the events in the world and the circumstances around us, regardless of the trials and tribulations that we go through.

- always look to Christ
- always look to the good
- always look beyond

Don’t get caught down and bogged down in a trial or difficulty that you’re not looking to God.

- He will deliver you
- He will help you
- He will raise you out of it

—and you will be joyful in the long run, because we ***have our minds fixed on Christ, the Beginner and Finisher of our faith.***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 8:28
- 2) Mark 12:28-31
- 3) John 15:13-19
- 4) Hebrews 12:1-4
- 5) James 1:1-4

- 6) Isaiah 26:1-5
- 7) Psalm 16:1-11
- 8) Psalm 27:1
- 9) Psalm 91:1-16
- 10) Psalm 27:1-5
- 11) Psalm 31:19-24
- 12) Psalm 27:6-8
- 13) Psalm 33:1-8, 12-15
- 14) Psalm 43:1-4
- 15) Psalm 126:1-6
- 16) Psalm 105:1-9
- 17) Romans 5:1-5

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2-Timothy 3
- Psalm 139
- Ephesians 2:12
- Revelation 1
- John 14
- Matthew 13
- Mark 4
- Isaiah 1
- Galatians 3:29

Also referenced: Book

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