

“Sing praises to the Lord, O you, His faithful ones, and give thanks to His holy name. For His anger is but for a moment; His favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.”

Psalm 30:4-5

Joy is what makes life worth living! However, for many, joy seems hard to find. People complain that their lives are sorrowful and depressing. What is it, then, that brings the joy we each so much desire? Are some people just lucky, while others, perhaps, have run out of luck? It is absolutely true that we *can* choose joy.

A number of years ago I read this glorious definition of joy that Paul Sailhamer had penned, and I'll never forget it. He said that “Joy is that deep settled confidence that God is in control of every area of my life.” Wow!! That allowed me to realize that joy is an attitude; joy is a posture; joy is, indeed, a choice.

Two people can be part of the same event, but one may choose to “live” it quite differently than the other. One may choose to trust that what happened, painful as it may be, holds a wonderful promise. Unfortunately, the other may choose despair, and be destroyed by it. What makes us human is precisely this freedom of choice.

Joy and sorrow are never separated. When our hearts rejoice at a spectacular view, we may also miss our friends who cannot see it. Likewise, when we are overwhelmed with grief, we may discover what true friendship is all about. Joy is hidden in sorrow, and sorrow in joy. If we try to avoid sorrow at all costs, we may never taste joy. And, if we are suspicious of ecstasy, agony can never reach us, either.

Joy and sorrow are the parents of our spiritual growth. As I believe more deeply in Paul Sailhamer's definition of joy, and as I'm convinced that Christ's body was broken and His blood shed that I might indeed be saved, my joy increases!

Lord, You won our redemption. Please allow us to respond to You in love. We ask You to be more and more in charge of each and every area of our lives. I pray that we will feel Your love in us as we live it out in all our actions. Heavenly Father, help us become true Easter people!

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(Submitted in 2009)

