

## SATAN TRIED TO STEAL MY JOY!

### Part One

Three of God's golden nuggets are joy, simplicity and contentment and they are the Father's heart of love for you. He is a God who cares about our personal concerns. God wants to show us the way to a healthy and happier life. His plan is not for His children to just exist—but that they live their lives to the fullest as He has so ordained, which is totally opposite of Satan's plans for the believer.

Let's examine some facts. Jesus died so we could have eternal life, but He also died so that we could have a better life here on earth. More and more you are hearing people, including believers say, *Life is too hard—I'm so tired—Nothing ever works out for me—I'm so depressed, or My joy is gone, what do I have to live for?* Have you encountered this negative attitude in your daily walk? Proverbs 17:22 says, *A merry heart does good like a medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.* I don't know about you, but I need the joy of the Lord—the first golden nugget—with laughter and humor operating in my life. If we aren't walking in the joy of the Lord, how in the world can we share it with others?

**Fact:** Satan tries to steal the joy that is rightfully yours—rightfully yours because your joy was bought with Jesus' blood. Satan steals our joy and victory through clever lies that we often choose to believe. These lies breed fear, doubt and unbelief and we lose sight of God's promises as we allow Satan's lies to attack our position of invincible strength in Christ. We then become vulnerable instead of victorious when we give ground to Satan's lies.

**Fact:** Satan will always seek a foothold in your life, but God provides the tools (weapons) to fight him with, and I believe that TRUTH is one of our most effective and important tool—John 8:32, 36 – *Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free (NIV)* and *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.* Truth is vital for the believer to live, walk and move in! Know truth! Speak truth! Live Truth! Your truth should be—*I'm too blessed to be stressed!* Amen!

There was a little old lady, who every morning, stepped onto her front porch, raised her arms to the sky, and shouted at the top of her voice, *Praise the Lord!*

One day an atheist moved into the house next door. He became irritated at the little old lady, so every morning he'd step onto his front porch after her and yell, *There is no Lord!*

Time passed with the two of them carrying on this way day after day. Then one morning, in the middle of winter, the little old lady stepped onto her front porch and shouted: *Praise the Lord!* Then she added, *Please Lord, I have no food and I am starving, provide for me, oh Lord!*

The next morning she stepped onto her porch and there were two huge bags of groceries sitting there. *Praise the Lord!* She cried out. *The Lord has provided groceries for me!*

The atheist neighbor jumped out from behind the bushes and shouted: *Ha! There is no Lord, I bought those groceries.*

The little old lady threw her arms into the air and shouted: *Praise the Lord! He has provided me with groceries and made the devil pay for them.* She has caught the heart of walking in joy.

1 Peter 1:8, 9 says...*whom having not seen (Jesus Christ) you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.* In this scripture we see that our joy is linked together with our faith. True contentment only comes from accepting and following Jesus. God didn't promise days without pain, laughter without sorrow, and sun without rain, but He did promise strength for the day (our joy), comfort for the tears, and light for the way.

**Fact:** As God's children, we need to stop expecting other people to make our day. Instead, let's turn our thoughts, our attitudes around and bless their day. If you will practice eyes off self and eyes on Jesus, it will keep a right heart attitude and victory will bless your life. God and His truth must be our first priority. And if you treat your Bible as your personal counselor—its wisdom will assure you of God's love for you, and help you become a better person.

Jesus came that we could have and enjoy life abundantly. I believe enjoying life is a precious gift from God. Would you agree that our feelings are fickle—they can have us going 101 different ways in a 24 hour period. Then we cop out by blaming it on anything we can to avoid the truth of our responsibility. We need to learn to speak from the Word of God and not from our feelings and eventually our feeling will catch up and come into line with God's truth. God's truth is greater than our feelings. Let God's worth fill your life. Walk in who you are in Jesus.

Believers are living in tough times and getting a grip on life is often difficult. It's like someone keeps greasing the rope we're hanging onto (our life line) and we keep losing our grip and start sliding back down the rope. Oh, we keep flipping around in circles trying to see who's doing the greasing so we can protect ourselves, but we can't always catch the culprit—it becomes a *no win* battle.

There is an old parable that says, *All sunshine and no rain makes a desert.* If you never have any up and down times, any difficult battle, any heart breaking, painful and often earth shaking situation in your life, and if you never face any circumstances that seemingly you can't see your way through, then you are going to dry up. You won't have any root system in life to anchor you. You will never develop the maturity that God wants you to develop as a believer. Listen my friend, God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage. If God brings you to it, He will bring you through it.

**Fact:** it takes the good times and the bad times both to make a mature Christian. It takes ups and downs, boring and exciting, pain and pleasure, victory and defeat, failures and successes, and mountain tops and valleys to come into the place of balance and maturity in our lives through God.

It is all part of our journey. Do we like it? No! But, it is the reality of life and when we learn to accept those times and trust in God to provide the joy—our strength—then we can make it through the difficult times and we move on. Remember that when the world pushes you to your knees; you're in the perfect position to pray—SO PRAY!

Luci Swindoll shares that life is full of subtle, unsuspected, hidden perks, all ready to make their presence known at the turn of a corner to cheer us, to lift us, to change our attitudes, to give our souls a reason to celebrate. Let's get our eyes off the negative and be ready to receive and be blessed by those hidden perks.

**Fact:** How do we overflow with joy? By doing things for Christ, learning to forgive and love others, by surrendering to God everything in our lives, and by learning to relax! That's a big one. I encourage you to settle back into Daddy God's arms. Let Him create in your spirit his joy, peace and rest. Whatever your lifestyle, your situation, your connections, fix your eyes on Jesus. Then all your relationships will fall into place and you can and will walk in the fullness of God's provided joy. There are over 100 scriptures on joy in the Bible, which tell me what God thinks about the necessity of walking in joy. It is important! Psalm 34:8 – *Oh taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man (woman) who trusts in Him!*

Maybe your reading this today and you are feeling *stuck in life*, or holding onto things that are stopping the flow of God in your life. Do you want to be free? Jesus is your answer. He always has been and He always will be your way out. Stretch out your faith today and believe that Jesus Christ, who gave His life for you at Calvary will minister to your heart, mind, soul and spirit and He will break the bondages, the lies and the unbelief that would hold you victim. He wants you to walk as an OVERCOMER in Him. That is your fact today. That is your promise today.

One of the ways that we achieve this freedom is through simplicity in our lives. This will be the second nugget I will discuss in Part Two. Remember, that when God shows you something in your life that needs to be changed, He will also help you to accomplish it. He partners with you. We never fight the battles alone. He never leaves nor forsakes us. He is our life partner.