

CHIEF

MINISTRIES

May 2023

Greetings in the name of the Lord,

Hopefully you will get this newsletter prior to the beginning of May or at least within the first few days of May. My delay in writing was because I wanted to have a fresh word from heaven for you after experiencing our 29th annual Embracing His Presence conference this past weekend at the church I attend. For any of you who knew and were mentored by Chief he loved the presence of God and part of his mandate from God was to help others get into the presence of God. There are a lot of good services around, and God loves that but, what He really loves is the people that are hungry, really, really, hungry, for His presence and His presence alone. It is in that secret place that the Lord can speak to us, lead us, guide us, and most importantly change us to be more like Jesus. Let's look at what the word says about His presence.

In Psalm 16:11 it says, *"In your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore,"* in the Passion Translation it says: *"For you bring me a continual revelation of resurrection life, the path to the bliss that brings me face to face with you."* There is no Hebrew word for "presence." When the psalmist wanted to speak of God's presence, he uses the Hebrew word for "face". When we come face-to-face with God things happen, there is no way we in our mortal bodies are not impacted. Again, we have a choice, and that choice is how hungry are we to go after and seek His presence? Yes, His presence is everywhere, you cannot go anywhere, not even in prison (Psalm 139:7, Matthew 28:7) that God is not there. The difference is when we seek His presence, we look for His presence, we earnestly desire His presence, He is faithful and loves us so much and wants us in His presence even more than we want to be in His, (Psalm 27:8) He will surround you with Himself (Psalm 31:19-20).

In the beginning, prior to sin, Adam was in God's presence continually. When sin entered in, God went looking for Adam, now God knew where Adam was at. That was the first time that Adam was separated from God, Adam was no longer in His presence, he was separated by sin. But that is a whole other newsletter.

I want to talk about joy and what joy has to do with His presence, what it is, why it is, and keys to use it.

Joy is many things, a fruit of the Spirit right up there with love and peace. How does one get joy? What does joy look like? Why would we want to have joy?

Many years ago, Jerry Saville wrote a book entitled, *If Satan Can't Steal Your Joy...He Can't Keep Your Goods*. The title says it all, the enemy is real, and the word is very clear that we are to be aware of the schemes of the enemy to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Therefore, one of Satan's strategies to keep us from knowing who we are in God, reaching our destiny, and fulfilling the purposes that we are ordained to fulfill for the kingdom is by stealing our joy. Because if he steals our joy, we start questioning all those things and even the promises that God has made us throughout the Bible. So, first and foremost joy must be maintained in our lives, so we know who we are and Whose we are.

Additionally, that means that joy is a weapon. When we are faced with trials and circumstances in our lives it is very easy to lose our joy. We must be diligent and always aware that as the enemy steals our joy, he can keep our goods (promises). There are over 8000 promises in the Word for us as believers. We are told 365 times not to fear or some reference to fear or being afraid. When we are in His presence, there is fullness of joy, and any trial or rough place we may face fades in comparison.

Besides being a weapon, the Word also says: Joy is like a medicine, *A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones (Proverbs 17:22 ESV)*. So, what does that mean in real life? It means, regardless of what we are faced with when we allow those things to replace the joy that we have as a result of the sacrifice that was made for us on the cross we allow the enemy to keep our goods, the promises, the plans, and the hope and future that the Lord has for each one of us (Jeremiah 29:11).

One of the ways of maintaining our joy is through praise and worship. Remembering what was done for us on the cross and being thankful that we are redeemed into the fellowship (presence) of God. But you say, Ms. G, if you only knew what I was going through, or what I have been through. And I say to you, in the darkest part, time, of our lives, God is still with you and wants you to be whole, happy (full of joy), and set free. Sometimes it is a sacrifice (on our part) to praise because that is the last thing we want to do. But the Lord says, that is what is going to set you free and restore not only your joy but your goods. Never doubt that He is with you, and for you in every step of your journey. If He be for you, who can be against you (Romans 8:31). Several places in scripture we are told to make a joyful noise and sing (Psalms 81:1, Psalm 95:1-2, John 16:22-24, 1Kings 1:40, James 1:2, Romans 12:12, Romans 15:13, 1 Peter 1:8, Philippians 4:4, Acts 13:52) to name a few.

People in the community refer to the church I attend as the Happy Church. We love the presence of God and in His presence IS fullness of joy! The presence of God is foremost when we gather and that is where we allow ourselves to be changed. In James it says, we are to count it all joy when we are tested and in our trials of faith because it produces steadfastness (James 1:2-18 ESV).

James 1:2-3 NIV says, “Consider it **pure joy**, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.” The Lord instructs us to view our trials as pure joy; which is totally opposite from the human mindset. Our natural instinct is to withdraw, become angry, fall into a depression, and to focus on the pain. Well in being transparent that is my initial instinct. We live in a fallen world, and with that comes our inherent tendency to lean towards the negative. We have to fight for the positive; we have to fight for pure joy. Remember if the enemy can steal your joy....he can keep your goods! But you say how?

Through my trials, I have learned a couple keys that have unlocked my pure joy.

RETAIN A THANKFUL HEART

We always, always, at all times, have something to be thankful for! A thankful heart is good medicine. There is comfort in the Lord's truth; 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV) says, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” The Lord's will is for us to be so sure of Him and His goodness, that we remain thankful in every circumstance. Easier said than done, right? I'm sure you have heard of that saying “practice makes perfect.” The more you practice thankfulness, it will soon become your go-to emotion. Believe me, there have been many a time when a “thankful heart” couldn't have been further from my reality. Start small, stay consistent. You will get there. Learn to laugh, laughing in the presence of trials confuses the enemy, in his eyes you are to be having a pity party. It is a weapon, and a very effective one. Besides if you laugh especially when you really want to cry, the sadness lifts, it's all about the choices.

PRAISE GOD IN YOUR TRIAL

When I have found myself in a trial the verse that comes to mind is, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (MSG) when Paul says:

“Because of the extravagance of those revelations, and so I wouldn't get a big head, I was given the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations. Satan's angel did his best to get me down; what he in fact did was push me to my knees. No danger then of walking around high and mighty! At first I didn't think of it as a gift, and begged God to remove it. Three times I did that, and then he told me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become.”

We must make a choice to view our hardships/trials/handicaps as gifts, as Paul did. In fact, when we praise God in our trials or my “weakness” it keeps me close to Him and His unlimited supply of supernatural strength.

KEEP YOUR TRUST IN GOD

God can be trusted! No matter how many times we walk through something, we must choose to trust God, even if it seems like there is no hope. God is our hope. Afterall, what has the Lord done to NOT earn my trust? NOTHING. God has kept every single promise He has ever made (remember there are over 8000). God can do anything. It is interesting to me that there are songs about almost anything you can think of when it comes to our lives and living as a believer. Many of them come directly from the bible and when you research the inspiration behind the song by the artist it reflects and confirms

again what the Bible said that as believers WE WILL be tried and tested in our faith. But to be of good cheer.....WE WIN!! There is a song 'Worthy of Your Name' by Passion. The bridge says it all...

You're my author, my maker
My ransom, my Savior
My refuge, my hiding place
You're my helper, my healer
My blessed redeemer
My answer, my saving grace
You're my hope in the shadows
My strength in the battle
My anchor for all my days
You stand by my side
And You stood in my place
Jesus, no other name

Jesus is worthy of His name! The name above all names! A name that defines trust. With everything, big or small, He cares and can be trusted. And that is something to be thankful for → JOY!

FOCUS ON GOD, NOT YOUR TRIAL

What a powerful thing it is to shift our focus from the storm to the light. Shifting our focus aligns our hearts and posture to praise God, and praising God brings joy! Have you ever sat and meditated on how BIG God is? How powerful? How magnificent?

“Who has scooped up the entire ocean in his two hands, or measured the sky between his thumb and little finger, ^{v13} Who has put all the earth's dirt in one of his baskets, weighed each mountain and hill? ^{v13} Who could ever have told God what to do or taught him his business? ^{v14} What expert would he have gone to for advice, what school would he attend to learn justice? ^{v15} What god do you suppose might have taught him what he knows, showed him how things work? ^{v16} Why, the nations are but a drop in a bucket, a mere smudge on a window. Watch him sweep up the islands like so much dust off the floor! ^{v17} There aren't enough trees in Lebanon nor enough animals in those vast forests to furnish adequate fuel and offerings for his worship. All the nations add up to simply nothing before him—less than nothing is more like it. A minus” (Isaiah 40:12-17 MSG).

And yet in ALL His magnificence, omniscience (all-knowing), omnipotence (all-powerful), and omnibenevolence (supremely good), He still cares about even the smallest of concerns you have and wants to bless you with the desires of your heart. His goodness, mercy, and love is not always what we are taught or how we view Him. Seeing Him afar and as a tyrannical God that is just waiting to pop you a good one for not doing something you should do or doing something you shouldn't have done. That is especially prevalent for those who may not have had a loving, giving, and supportive earthly father. For those raised without a father figure in the home it may be difficult to understand God the Father's love for you. But ask Him to show you His love and believe what He says about you. Read the Word, it was written for us as believers. BIBLE (Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth). It is our roadmap through this life. The Holy Spirit was sent to teach us, comfort us and help us on our journey, receive all He has to offer.

So, make a choice today to walk and live in unspeakable joy and thankfulness regardless of the situation you are in. That joy will keep you close to His heart and protected from whatever the enemy is doing. Our God is bigger than any enemy.

I plan on keeping my joy and my goods....How about you? Blessings in Christ to all of you,

Ms. Chief (aka Ms.G)

If you want to know more about CHIEF Ministries or would like to be a part, please go to www.chiefministries.com

Christ's Heart In Every Felon



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