

ONLY THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT – PART 2 (PERSECUTION AND JOY)

Romans 8:11 ... “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”

Today we continue our series of devotionals about the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish what we cannot do ourselves.

PERSECUTION – 2 Corinthians 12:10 reads: “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Persecution takes many forms. It can be a neighbor who laughs at you for attending church, a classmate who ridicules you for being a Christian, or a captor who beheads you for following Christ. In the mildest form of persecution, you might be embarrassed; in the worst case you might die for your faith and many around the world are doing so every day. Paul gives us a powerful clue about how he endured persecution when he said “when I am weak, then I am strong.” Paul is referring to the work of the Holy Spirit through him. The attacks on his life that made his body and mind weak, enabled the Holy Spirit to strengthen him supernaturally. Paul knew when to allow the Holy Spirit to work through him and we need to learn the same thing.

JOY – Romans 14:17: “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit, which means that as you allow the Holy Spirit to work in and through you, and to guide you toward a righteous lifestyle, joy will emerge as one of your character traits. In this verse Paul is telling us that the source of our joy (and peace) is the Holy Spirit. On your own, you can only generate joy for a limited time until something happens in your life to rob you of that joy. If your family surprises you with a wonderful birthday party tonight, you will probably experience joy. But when you wake up tomorrow you will face the same struggles, hardships, pain and tiredness you feel every day. Joy created by man is very temporary.

But, with the Holy Spirit working in your life, joy is consistent, even as you go through trials and persecution. Do not confuse joy with happiness; they are very different. Joy is a product of God’s Holy Spirit dwelling and working within you, while happiness is something you develop through good choices and decisions, and a positive attitude. God’s joy is the most important because it will uplift you during the most difficult problems and challenges, even when you find it difficult or impossible to be happy.

I urge you to study God’s Word concerning the Holy Spirit because there are blessings and helps that can come only through the Holy Spirit of God.

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