

Setting the Pace

by Sherry Jones

The apostle Paul said, “Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice.” The New Life Translation says, “Be full of joy always because ye belong to the Lord. Again I say, be full of joy.” We are admonished to stay in an attitude of rejoicing, thanksgiving, and praise. The biggest challenge we have is our own attitude. The scripture does not say to rejoice when everything is perfect and when we feel like it. But every day, we can master our feelings and set the pace to run our race by rejoicing in the Lord. We can choose to be joyful or choose to be miserable. We can choose to be glad or sad and to laugh or to cry. People are always waiting until something happens before they get happy. If you take that approach, you may be waiting a while. Joy is a fruit of the spirit and it comes from our heart. We can stir up the joy of the Lord which resides on the inside of us. Abraham Lincoln said, “People are about as happy as they want to be.” There are several important things that happen when you choose to walk in joy,

- 1) You are telling the devil, “You lose!” The devil will do everything he can to get you to quit or to get you off course. T.D. Jakes said, “If you don’t rejoice, the devil will think that he is winning.” You ought to be able to tell how big the fight is by how much you rejoice. We don’t have to wait before we get into a church building to praise God. Paul and Silas were in a prison cell and they began to praise God at midnight instead of complaining and whining about their miserable situation. Their praises reached the heart of God and the foundations of the prison were shaken, doors opened, and people were born again.
- 2) You are announcing that Jesus is triumphant and He is Lord. We praise Him because He spoiled principalities and powers and made a show of them openly. He completed his race and “for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb.12:2). Jesus is Lord. When we release joy, we are expressing the triumph of Christ in the earth.
- 3) You are demonstrating that you believe the Word of God and you act in faith accordingly. Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. The Living Bible says, “And he praised God for this blessing before it ever happened.” He was rejoicing, laughing, and praising God before Isaac was born. Faith always contains an element of rejoicing. Praise and rejoicing sets the pace. The joy of the Lord denotes victory. We know the outcome before the manifestation of the outcome.