

Beloved friends, I extend to you warm & personal greetings. Bathe yourselves in HIS LOVE today---KNOWING HE is ALWAYS with you (Matt. 28:20). This is encouraging & also KNOWING HE is the GOD of ALL comfort, who comforts us in our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort which we ourselves are comforted by God (II Cor. 1:2-4). What an AWESOME GOD we serve.

August was another blessed month of ministry & each service was very well attended. As usual, the HOLY SPIRIT brought in another good harvest of over 300. The biggest harvest came from the LA Cty. Jail Sunday service. They responded to the WORD OF GOD. I was blessed this month to get a 4-day recharge & rest time in Palm Springs from Connie Robinson, who has typed my newsletters for years. Spent a lot of time in prayer, the Word & wrote 3 sermons.

I'm really enjoying my time on Tuesdays with the brothers in the Spiritual Growth Program at the Fred Jordan Missions. It is such a blessing to see them grow in the WORD & LOVE of the LORD. On the other hand, it is heartbreaking when some leave & go back onto the streets. Some keep running from GOD, but as with Jonah, GOD knows where we are.

Marilyn, a precious sister who schedules speakers at the L.A. Mission, always calls me when someone cancels. She knows I always have a CHRIST CRUCIFIED sermon ready. This is in addition to the 1st Friday & 2nd Wednesday there.

Last month & this month, scores of children 7 to 12 came forward to receive JESUS in their precious hearts at the Union Rescue Mission Women's Service. After more than 19 years of ministering there, it is still a heart struggle for me when I see so many women & children homeless & struggling. It's the same at the women's prisons which also had a good harvest. Their children need them, but they made bad choices, so the children are also serving time---away from mom.

This is why we have to press on to share the GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST & SALVATION, & tell the TRUTH that GOD has given us through FAITH in HIS SON:

Σ We are saved by FAITH. (Eph. 2:8 & Rom. 10:9, 10). God loves us & has poured out HIS GRACE over our lives thru JESUS CHRIST.

Σ When we receive CHRIST in our hearts, our name is recorded in the LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE.

Σ The LOVE that GOD has for us is UNCONDITIONAL LOVE. (John 3:16).

Σ JESUS is ALIVE within us through the presence of the HOLY SPIRIT. (II Tim. 1:14).

Σ God has NEVER failed to keep HIS PROMISES. (II Cor. 1:20; Heb. 6:18; Num. 23:19; Titus 1:2).

Σ WHATEVER we face today, HE faces it with us. HE promised NEVER to abandon us. (Deut. 31:6; Heb. 13:5).

Therefore, we can CHOOSE JOY over disappointment & discouragement. James 1:2, 3 says, "consider it all JOY my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the TESTING of your FAITH produces ENDURANCE."

I think of the prophet Habakkuk's testimony in Chap. 3:17, 18 that stands out as one of the most towering expressions of FAITH found anywhere in the scriptures. "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail & the fields shall yield no meat (food), the flock shall be cut off from the fold, & there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet (in spite of it all) I WILL REJOICE IN THE LORD, I WILL JOY IN THE GOD OF MY SALVATION." Habakkuk lived & ministered immediately prior to the Babylonian defeat of Israel in the year 606 B.C. As a prophet of the LORD, he foresaw clearly the devastating events which were about to engulf his beloved land & people. He knew his nation was sinful & that they deserved judgement. While Habakkuk did not fully understand the ways of GOD bringing this devastating judgement, he nevertheless professed TRUST in GOD'S GOODNESS & FAITHFULNESS. This message is desperately NEEDED for this hour of history. The prophet had made his decision. He had thought carefully & had come to a conclusion. Even if his world came unzipped, even if the most basic things of life were taken away, he would REJOICE in the LORD & JOY in the GOD of his SALVATION.

There's a BIG difference between true JOY & happiness. Happiness goes when circumstances change. True JOY, eternal JOY, is not based on the

natural circumstances of life or our ability to fit GOD into our emotional ìFEEL GOODî box. JOY is based on something much more meaningful. A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST. It is HIS presence that fuels the light of JOY within the life of each believer. If we allow something to darken this light, than we will sense the pressures of this world closing in on us. Feelings have nothing to do with lasting JOY, no matter what we face. JOY is maintained by a CONSTANT FOCUS on the TRUTH OF GOD.

Habakkuk learned to TRUST in the LORD & REJOICE, no matter what the circumstances. We desperately need to learn the same lesson. We must cultivate our FAITH & TRUST NOW. There is no greater privilege than to be living for CHRIST at this opportune, challenging, momentous moment of history. In CHRIST, we are on the WINNING SIDE. JESUS ALWAYS tips the scales in our favor.

Until next month, may GOD BLESS YOU & to you who BLESSED me with LOVE offerings, a 100-fold return.

In His Majestyís service,

Mel Novak