

Ernest Komanapalli

THE SECRET OF JOY

The apostle Paul writes about this very emphatically. He says that it's all in our minds. Everything is first in our minds and then reflected in our lives.

There are circumstances that steal our joy, over which we have no control even though we are men of God. It is the Lord who allows certain difficult circumstances to occur. If our attitude is right, we will be victorious over these circumstances and not victims of them.

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul says that true unity and joy are only possible in Jesus. In the four chapters to Philippians, he speaks about the mind.

A second thing that can steal our joy is other people. They can bring us joy, but they can also steal it. We can't isolate ourselves from people. We're among them. We see all kinds of people. We hear all kinds of things. And yet, we have to rise above it all.

Worldly things steal our joy. We need to be very careful that worldly things don't overwhelm us and steal our joy.

Four attitudes that produce joy despite the circumstances, people, and things that happen in the world.

The first attitude: Simplicity of mind (Phil. 1.21 and 27).

“For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” This is being simple of mind. Having one mind, one purpose. In verse 27 it says, “...that you stand firm in one spirit, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.” We have gathered with one mind to fight together for the faith of the gospel. One mind. We cannot all have the same thoughts, but we can all have the same mental disposition, a single attitude, which is to lift up Jesus Christ in this international apostolic gathering.

The second attitude: A submissive mind (Phil. 2.3-4).

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”

We have gathered here, brothers, and we must have this attitude: to prefer one another. To give thanks to God for my brother, for his gifts, for his inspiration. We are here to

encourage one another, to lift one another up. To be grateful that God allowed us to come and have fellowship with my brother.

The third attitude: A spiritual mind. (Phil. 3:19-20).

"...They think only of earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, from where we also await a Savior..."

Our mind should be heavenly, spiritual, and not earthly.

We are strangers and pilgrims. We have one purpose, one work to do: to unite the body of Christ. Our citizenship is in heaven. While we are on earth, we have a commission; we are commissioned people. You are specially chosen. God has a purpose through you. May God be glorified through your life, and may our joy be complete.

The apostle Paul wrote this letter from prison. Despite his circumstances, his heart was full of joy. Our natural minds would tell us, "This can't be." Paul overcame his circumstances and all those things that could have distracted him. Despite the suffering and the chains, he had joy. His attitude and mind were spiritual, not earthly. A spiritual mind sets us above our circumstances.

Let me tell you something personal. I went to Southampton. Tony Morton's wife wasn't well, but I saw Tony saying to me, "God is good, Ernest. God is good." He wasn't complaining. He was praising God. In my heart, I was weeping because Hanna wasn't well. She had, on another occasion, been leading worship, which had been a great blessing to me. The next thing I heard from her, she was sick, she wasn't well. But Tony's attitude was: God is going to heal my wife. Victory over the circumstances. Today she is perfectly healthy and rejoicing. This is the spiritual mind. We don't put our thoughts on things. We focus our minds on the spiritual, and God hears, answers, and heals.

The fourth attitude: A secure mind . (Phil. 4:7-8)

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." That is our security. We are safe in Christ. Verse 8 tells us what to think about in everything.

These four chapters all speak of this—of our mind, of our attitude: a simple, submissive, spiritual, and secure mind. May this be our unanimous way of thinking about Christ Jesus.

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