



## Lesson 8: Joy

Psalm 126 (The Message)

- <sup>1-3</sup> **126** It seemed like a dream, too good to be true,  
when GOD returned Zion's exiles.  
We laughed, we sang,  
we couldn't believe our good fortune.  
We were the talk of the nations—  
"GOD was wonderful to them!"  
GOD *was* wonderful to us;  
we are one happy people.
- <sup>4-6</sup> And now, GOD, do it again—  
bring rains to our drought-stricken lives  
So those who planted their crops in despair  
will shout hurrahs at the harvest,  
So those who went off with heavy hearts  
will come home laughing, with armloads of blessing.

### ***I. Joy Is A Consequence Of Salvation***

*"We laughed, we sang, we couldn't believe our good fortune."*

Joy is a characteristic of Christians pilgrimage. It is second in the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. It is the first signs in the gospel of John when Jesus turned the water into wine at a wedding party.

Joy is not a requirement of discipleship it is a consequence! Joy is not something we acquire in order to experience life in Christ; it is what comes to us when we are walking in the way of faith and obedience.

### ***II. Joy: Past, Present, Future***

The center sentence in the Psalm is "We are one happy people" (v3). The words on one side of that center( verses 1-2) are in the past tense and the words on the other side (verses 4-6) are in the future tense. Present gladness has past and future. It is not just a spurt of good feelings that

comes when things go our way. We fill our minds with the stories of God's acts. Joy has a history. Joy is the verified, repeated experience of those involved with what God is doing.

### ***III. Joyful Expectation***

The other side of "we are one happy people" – verses 4-6 is in the future tense. Joy is nurtured by anticipation. If the joy-producing acts of God are characteristic of our past, they will also be characteristic of our future. God never changes. Just as joy builds on the past, it borrows from the future because it expects certain things to happen.

Joy comes not escaping our boredom but from by faith living in the will of God ("those who went off with heavy hearts will come home laughing, with armloads of blessing"). There is always plenty of suffering on both sides, past and future. The joy comes because God knows how to wipe away tears, and in his resurrection work will create a new life, with new smiles!

This psalm does not give us this joy in a neat package or as a formula. It introduces us to the way of discipleship, which has the consequences of joy.