

#2 The Passionate Disciple Part 2 - 'Going Deeper into the Disciplines for Ordinary Disciples'

'A "HALLEUJAH DAY": THE PRACTISE OF CELEBRATION'

Today, I want to talk about our first discipline for Ordinary Christians.

What a way to start...

Can I ask you to think of the biggest problem or challenge or trouble you have right now. Share it with someone!

Now let's thank God for it. Lets praise God for it!

Can I suggest that it is time we take joy 'seriously'!

C.S. Lewis said "Joy is the serious business of Heaven!"

It seems to me we miss this because we take life too seriously! By that I mean we don't enjoy the routines like we should.

We are God's agents to bring heaven to earth,

Revelation 21: 3 (NIV) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

G.K. Chesterton said, "It may be that He has the eternal appetite for infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we!

Children have not lost their sense of wonder and joy - we do as we grow old!

GOD IS JOYFUL AND HE WANTS US TO BE TOO...

Listen to these Scriptures

John 15: 11 (NIV) I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Philippians 4:4 (NIV) Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Psalms 105: 1–2 (NIV) Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts.

Ephesians 5:20 (NIV) Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:6–7 (NIV) So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV) Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Betsy & Corrie!

Example of Nehemiah

Nehemiah 8:9–10 (NIV) Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is holy to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law. Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

SO HOW DO WE PURSUE JOY, CELEBRATION, PRAISE, THANKFULNESS?

1. WE ACT NOW, WE BEGIN NOW!

Psalms 118:24 (NKJV) This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Its not yesterday! Its not tomorrow!

How in this hurting world?

Happiness is based on happenings, Joy comes from Jesus within!

Joy is as Karl Barth put it, a "defiant nevertheless" set as a full stop against bitterness and resentment.

2. FIND A JOY MENTOR OR MENTORS

A farmer had a neighbour, a constant complainer, a wet blanket in the linen closet of life. The farmer decided to impress his neighbour for once in his life and so he invested and bought the worlds greatest hunting dog. Trained it to perfection and invited his neighbour to go hunting. He showed the neighbour his dog - sitting still for an hour, hearing the slightest sound, picking up scent and pointing with his nose, then the farmer quickly shot down a wild duck for roast dinner and the bird landed in the middle of the lake! His dog was off immediately, walking on the water over to the duck, gently picking it up and

dropped him at the feet of his master. "What did you think of that?" The farmer asked. His friend replied, "Your dog can't swim, can he?"

Proverbs 15:30 (GNB) Smiling faces make you happy, and good news makes you feel better.

Proverbs 15:30 (NIV) Light in a messenger's eyes brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones.

Make a joy appointment with people who enjoy life.

3. SET ASIDE TIME EACH DAY TO REJOICE AND BE THANKFUL

We are going to be rejoicing in heaven - get some practice now!

Revelation 19:7 (NIV) Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

Isaiah 55:12 (NIV) You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

4. RENEW AND TRANSFORM YOUR MIND

Romans 12:2 (NIV) Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Philippians 4:8 (NIV) Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

So let's do an exercise together...

List some things you are thankful for...

Even some tough things...

Take 2 minutes...

Lets call them out...