

JOY UNSPEAKABLE

"Though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." I Peter 1:8.

Christians are the happiest people in the world. They rejoice "with joy unspeakable," and nobody else does. Why are they so happy?

1. They know that their sins are all forgiven.

Nobody except a Christian can know that his sins are all forgiven. How does a Christian know it?

- (1) God says so.

"All that believe are justified from all things." Acts 13:39.

A woman came to Jesus, washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. He said, "Woman, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven." She knew that they were. God says, "All that believe are justified from all things."

- (2) The Holy Spirit bears witness to it.

"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. When we believe in Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts bearing witness with our spirits that our sins are forgiven and we are the children of God.

There is great joy when a man is pardoned by any governor. What a joy there is when a man knows that all his sins are pardoned and blotted out, and God holds nothing against him! David was a great sinner, but God forgave him. David had so much to make him happy — he was the greatest king of his day, he had great wealth, great armies, a beautiful palace, etc., but he wrote, not happy is the man who is beloved by his people, but "Happy is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; happy is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."

2. They are set free from sin's power.

Everyone who sins is a slave. He is a slave to sin. Some slaves have had kind masters. Others had masters who were exceedingly cruel. It makes our hearts ache to think of what some slaves have suffered. But there has never been a slave owner who was as cruel as Satan. No bondage is as awful as bondage to sin. Some are bound by the appetite for strong drink and dope. Others are bound by a bad temper. Everyone who is out of Christ is a slave. When one comes to Christ and accepts Him He sets him free. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Jesus sets people free from the sins which I have just mentioned as well as from impurity, profanity, etc. He takes away the desire for the things that are wrong.

3. They know that they are the children of God.

It is a wonderful thing to possess this knowledge. How can one know that he is

a child of God? By what God says -- "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12. The very moment that you accept Christ you automatically become the child of God. Suppose that you knew you were the child of a millionaire, a king or an emperor! Don't you think you would be happy? Your happiness in either case would not even compare with the happiness that comes with the realization that you are a child of God. And the glorious thing about it is that the richest or the poorest can become the children of God.

4. They are delivered from all fear.

The true Christian, who studies his Bible, believes it, learns it and remembers it, is not afraid of anything or anybody. Even the rich do not have joy always because they are afraid that some calamity will overtake them. They do not enjoy what they have because they are afraid of losing it. But the true Christian is delivered from fear. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" A living faith in Jesus takes away all fear of man. It takes away the fear of death. A Christian is not afraid of death. He knows that it is simply a departure to be with Christ. It is a joyful thing to be without any fear of death. A Christian is also delivered from the fear of eternity. To people out of Christ eternity is a dreadful thing to think about, but for those who are in Christ it is the sweetest thing to think about. In eternity the Christian is where there is no sickness, no suffering, no separation or no sorrow forever. Where will you spend eternity?

5. They know that they will live forever.

It is a wonderful thing to know that throughout the endless ages you will live on and on and on. "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." I John 2:17. Before one becomes a Christian he does not look into the future. After he becomes a Christian he does look into the future. I sometimes wonder how many years I will have to preach the gospel. I don't know. It is not likely that they will be numerous. Then what? Eternity! That is better than preaching. It is a great joy to preach the gospel of Christ. It is a greater joy to know that I am going to live for all eternity in happiness and joy ever increasing. I don't wonder that Christians are happy.

6. They are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

They know that they have "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, laid up in store in heaven" for them. It is nice to live here, but we shall soon pass on. We shall not keep our property very long. But the poorest person who is a Christian will get an inheritance that will last forever. We become rich when we are born into the family of God. Some people have a hard time here. Their homes are not comfortable, but they won't have to live in them very long. If they have received Christ as their Saviour, they will go to a mansion when they leave this world. They become heirs of all that He is and has.

If you will really take Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, and surrender your whole heart and life to Him as your Lord and Master, there will come into your heart a sweet-

ness and joy above anything to be known this side of heaven. If you want darkness turned into sunshine, sadness turned into joy, despair turned into glory, defeat turned into victory, and bad turned into good, then receive the Lord Jesus Christ here and now.