

AN ENCOURAGING WORD FOR TROUBLING TIMES #150 (by Rev. Dr. Alice Wolfe, 2/5/21)

“Turn Your ‘Blah’ into Joy”

Lately, I've felt very tired and blah... (Perhaps you can relate.) I began to wonder why I am I feeling this way... Is my thyroid acting up? Am I not getting enough sleep or exercise? Am I not getting enough sunlight in this very gray Ohio winter weather? Am I just feeling this way because of the state of our nation and world (pandemic, political issues, etc.)? More than likely, it's a combination of all of them...

Many things can cause us to feel blah, blue, down, discouraged, depressed, sad, etc., and many things can bring (at least a temporary) smile to our faces (seeing or laughing with family and friends, sunshine, a beautiful sunrise or sunset, the beach or the mountains, babies or children playing, etc.). However, only one thing brings (ever)lasting joy to our hearts, and that is the joy of the Lord!

Many years ago, I felt more than blah; I was depressed. My life plans hadn't turned out like I wanted, and I struggled to find joy in anything. My heart was more than sad; my spirit was broken; and I struggled to smile at all. I struggled to have the joyful heart or cheerful face about which Solomon spoke:

“A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, but when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.” (Proverbs 15:13, NAS)

Thankfully, God led me to Psalm 16:11 (NIV):

“You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.”

As I read that verse over and over, God helped me realize something; I would never find lasting joy in anything I wanted (even if I got it). The ONLY place I would ever find true, lasting JOY is in God and being in his presence! So, what does that have to do with me feeling blah now? In addition to trying to get enough sleep, exercise, sunlight, etc., I most of all need to spend time in God's presence—in the Light of The Son, Jesus Christ. When I realize how much Jesus loves me and all He did for me, I experience joy in my heart. When I remember that Jesus is with me, and He will never leave me or forsake me, I experience Christ's joy. When I remember that the circumstances we're facing are only temporary, but God and His love are eternal, God brings joy to my heart. And when I live in God's presence moment by moment, day by day, God fills me with His joy and brings a smile to my face—and God can do the same for you!

I don't know how you're feeling or what you're facing today, but God does—and God is with you, right now. He will help you face whatever is before you, and He will carry you through. As you trust God, focus on living in His presence so He can fill your heart with His joy! As you experience the joy of the Lord in your heart, He'll turn your 'blahs' into smiles—that will not only brighten your day, but everyone else's around you!

PRAYER:

Loving God, I'm feeling _____. Regardless of the circumstances of life, help me choose to focus on you and to live your presence, moment by moment. As you make known to me the path of life, fill me with joy in your presence and bring joy to my face and life—so others see you and your joy in me. Amen.



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