

FULLNESS OF JOY

By
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Scripture Text: John 12:1-3 ". ..and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment" (John 12:3).

That was the happiest home in the whole area, because the Lord Jesus Christ had done a great work in the family of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Every member of the family had become happy because of His grace and power. All who passed by that house could smell sweet fragrance from the house, even to a long distance. That is the desire of the Lord Jesus Christ for every new home, that, people may come to know Him through them and they themselves may receive great joy. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to make our joy full as He says in John 16:24 and also in John 15:11. The desire, plan and purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ in saving us, is to make our joy full. Now, that joy does not depend upon worldly possessions or worldly qualifications. We may be very rich or poor, educated or illiterate, have a high position or no position, we may belong to any country, yet our joy can be full under all circumstances, and no man upon the earth can take away our joy from our hearts. Our Lord says in John 16:22, "... your joy no man taketh from you". Earthly joy can be taken away by our enemies, friends and circumstances but this joy can no man take away from us. People may try by words, deeds and schemes, but they will never succeed. What a joy it is! This joy is for all times, not occasionally. This is Paul's testimony too as he says in Phil.4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice".

Whenever there is a marriage, there is joy. In Jer. 33:11 and Isa. 62:5, the joy of the bridegroom and the bride is compared to heavenly joy. It is not ordinary joy but heavenly joy and God wants every home to have such a joy. But you may say, "We don't have such joy." In many cases this is true. It is not God's fault but our fault because we fail to abide by God's Word. In John 15:7 there is a very simple, divine law. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you". First of all we must be sure that we have everlasting life flowing in us. Just as the branch abides in the vine and brings forth fruit, we should abide in Him.

The Lord says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you". For every walk of life, we have God's Word-for childhood, youth, middle age, and for old age. For sickness, sufferings, trials and other circumstances, God's Word is given to us to overcome every situation and to come out victorious. We can say with Apostle Paul as a testimony in Phil. 4:13, " I can do all things through Christ". This man Paul was happy even in times of sorrow. "As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6:9, 10).

Now we find that the same truth is made clear to us through the story recorded in John 12:1-3. Let us see the condition of that family when the Lord Jesus Christ went first to Bethany, as we read in Luke10:38. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes to us the first time, His main purpose is to uncover our true condition. During His first visit to the home of Martha, she went to prepare food. Mary sat at the feet of the Lord. Lazarus was nowhere, because he had no interest in God's Word. He was

a good brother, full of affection but no hunger or thirst for God's Word. Martha also was very hard working, very gifted in cooking, and had a large heart. But her heart was full of jealousy, and she had a bad temper. Mary was good and humble outwardly, but inwardly proud. The Lord had seen their sorrow and He went to change them. Through the very same sorrow, they came to know that their Master was not an ordinary man. He had power over death. The same power came into them and they became new people. Before the Lord Jesus could make them happy, He had to transform them completely. In the same way, those who want a happy home, must be transformed by the Lord Jesus Christ. They must be born again.

In John 12:1-3 we have a fivefold secret of a happy home and a triumphant life. When the Lord Jesus Christ came for the first time they received Him and welcomed Him, but they treated Him as a guest. But now they came to know Who He was. They gave Him complete charge. That is the first secret of a happy home. Accept the Headship and the Lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ in your home. He must be the Lord in your hearts and homes. In other words, before you do anything, you must consult Him. Before making any plan go to Him. Before shopping or spending money, go to Him. Do not do anything on your own. He is the living Lord. He will speak to you. Say to Him, "Lord, show me Thy will, and Thy plan for today, where to go and what to do". When He speaks obey Him.

Secondly, Lazarus is the symbol of resurrection. The same power is meant for you and me. In all your difficulties, poverty and sickness or any situation, come to Him and ask Him for the power of resurrection. We overcome trials, not by will power or Bible knowledge or by long prayers or fasting or wearing simple clothes, but by the power of resurrection. Do not depend upon your human cleverness for victory. You will never succeed. Claim the power of resurrection by faith.

Thirdly, the food on the table speaks of the Word of God, which is our daily spiritual food. It is by hearing God's Word daily as a family, meditating upon it and claiming His promises that all our questions and all our problems can be solved. In very few homes, they have regular family prayers. They are far too busy. Hence there is no unity in the family. Hence problems keep on increasing. It is by having family altar, reading the Word of God together and claiming God's promises that we can conquer our trials.

Fourthly, Martha served joyfully. For a happy home, you must have joyful service. Serve others and help others. A Christian home is meant for that purpose, where many can be comforted and strengthened. Where there is more service, there is more joy.

Fifthly, Mary was full of gratitude. With humility and meekness, she expressed her gratitude to the Lord. She poured the ointment on His feet. It is by worshipping Him and thanking Him and praising Him that we make a happy home. Learn to thank God for everything. Do not murmur. Phil.4:6 speaks of giving thanks. Begin the day with thanksgiving and end the day with thanksgiving.

These are simple divine laws. First of all, acknowledge the Headship and the Kingship of the Lord" Jesus Christ. Secondly, enjoy the power of resurrection. Thirdly, meditate the Word of God and enjoy it fully. Fourthly, joyful service and fifthly, a spirit of praise and

thanksgiving, to be able to thank the Lord for everything. All these make a happy home.
May the Lord bless these thoughts to our hearts.