

Joyful Life: Making the best decision

The joy of a hope in Christ

The joy of a relational Church community



'For I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death'

The Joy of a relational Church community

- Prayerful support
- Sharing expectations and hopes

The Joy of a hope in Christ

- God's provision
- Circumstances which might look negative can lead to deliverance
- The faithfulness of God
- Christ is honoured through his people, both in their life and death

'For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body this will mean fruitful labour for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound because of me'.

The Joy of a hope in Christ

- The promise of Christ in life and death
- A future, after death, with Christ which is 'better by far'

The Joy of a relational Church community

- Sharing in times of indecision; when we wrestle with our thoughts and emotions
- Serving the needs of others first
- Helping each other live the Christian life

'Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed but that you will be saved – and that by God'.

'The Christian life is not a playground; it is a battleground. We are sons in the family, enjoying the fellowship of the Gospel (Phil 1:11); we are servants sharing in the furtherance of the Gospel (Phil 1: 12-26) but we are also soldiers defending the faith of the Gospel'.

Warren Wiersbe

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The Joy of a hope in Christ

- The strength not to flinch in times of fear and opposition
- The gift of salvation

The Joy of a relational Church community

- Progressing and experiencing joy together in our faith
- Standing firm together
- Striving together
- Being united together

'For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for him since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had and now hear that I still have'.

The Joy of a hope in Christ

- The gift of belief and trusting in Christ
- The gift of suffering

The Joy of a relational Church community

- Identifying and sharing in struggles and suffering

The Joy of a hope in Christ

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- Circumstances which might look negative leading to deliverance
- The faithfulness of God
- Christ being honoured through his people, both in their life and death
- The promise of Christ in life and death
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'Don't let your heart be bitter in times of suffering, nor boastful in times of success. Recognise that God is over your life and your situation.' Nicky Gumbel

'When we are mistreated in any way we must realise that our suffering has profound and vast implications for the greater kingdom of God. There are unseen reasons for continued suffering. Who knows what God will do with your life if you take mistreatment with dignity?' R T Kendall

It is impossible to know the true taste of bread without experiencing hunger.

It is impossible to appreciate the value of fresh water without suffering from thirst.

It is impossible to enjoy the joy of sunrise without experiencing nightmares and insomnia.

It is impossible to know the power of forgiveness without knowing the repulsiveness of sin and force of the fall.

It is impossible to know the power of unity without experiencing the affliction of division.

It is impossible to know the power of prayer without full reliance on God.

Written by Taras Dyatlik, Ukraine