



Still Waiting For Peace?

The Surprising Places
REAL and LASTING Joy Shows Up

A 3 STEP GUIDE
to support the AMAZING NEW BOOK
titled

THE REALIZATION
of
HAPPINESS

BETTERDAY.LIFE
GRAB A TOWEL.

Still Waiting For the “Peace” you’ve been expecting?

When it doesn't feel like the “Kingdom” has come... at least not for you... (yet).

Let's start with an uncomfortable question.

What if the problem isn't your faith? (a little secret, it's NOT)

What if the problem isn't your prayer life, your church, pastor, or even the people around you ...
& even more confusing... what if the problem isn't YOU?

What if we've just misunderstood or been given warped ideas about **THE JOY THAT IS PROMISED**

...

what if instead of waiting for it to come to you ... you were supposed to **go give it** ...

I hear it said that “you cannot give what you do not have”... and while usually *that is true* @ I whole heartedly agree with and endorse that as an old solid truth ...
BUT NOT HERE ... it has no place in this conversation ... because

- like it or not ...
- know it or not ...
- feel it or not ...

if you have Jesus ... or rather if Jesus has you ... you do have Joy ...

just give me a sec here to show you where JOY has been hiding

We know that God has NOT forgotten where we live?

I know...

Those probably aren't the first places most Christians go or the 1st thoughts that a “believer” has.
None of the Faith Filled Followers of Christ I know would ever walk into church and announce:

"Good morning everyone. I'd just like you all to know that I'm deeply unhappy."

No of course, no one does that ... yet far too many of our spiritual peers are still struggling...
We don't say that...

Instead we say...

"I'm just tired, discouraged." "I've been under a lot of stress lately." "I'm frustrated, burned out."

"I'm struggling." "I feel stuck." "I don't know... it just feels like something is missing."

But we feel guilty for even saying that, because we know what the scripture and promises and we're not supposed to say, or even worse, feel like that.

Now to be completely fair:

- Sometimes life is just hard.
- Sometimes marriages struggle.
- Sometimes money gets tight.
- Sometimes prodigal children break our hearts.
- Sometimes addictions linger.
(this REALLY hurts when one person marvels at how easily addictions were chased away after giving their life to Christ while the other is still fighting their old issues.)
- Sometimes we pray and pray and pray... and the thing we prayed about is still sitting there when we step out of our “prayer closet.”

What then?

Because if we're honest, most of us expected things to be a little different.
We thought there'd be

- More joy.
- More peace.
- More victory.
- More of whatever it was everybody else seemed to be talking about.

Yet here we are.

- Still believing.
- Still praying.
- Still showing up.

And yet somehow, feeling guilty for wondering...

"Why does this feel harder than I thought it would?"

Over my 35 years of really trying to help people... I've noticed something fascinating.

When people lose their joy, they almost always start looking for it in the same place.

Themselves.

We analyze our feelings.

We replay our disappointments, our failures, our stumbles...

We examine our circumstances.

We stare at our problems.

And while some reflection is healthy, it rarely produces the joy we're looking for. The strange thing about joy is that Jesus often hides it in places we'd never think to look.

- Not in getting.
- Not in achieving.
- Not in arriving.

But in serving.

- In giving.
- In helping.
- In loving.

GET READY – THIS IS THE KEY:

The answer really is as easy/difficult as lifting someone else while we're still carrying our own burden.

This QUESTION is EVERYTHING – right here:

**Can you BELIEVE HIM and His Eternal Word
Over YOUR CURRENT Circumstances**

Now before you roll your eyes and say,

"Great... another preacher telling me to work harder," ... hang on just *relax*.

That's NOT where we're going.

In the next few pages we're going to look at 3 people who were struggling long before social media, cable news, inflation, and group text messages were invented.

Within each story we'll discover the same surprising truth:

Sometimes the joy we've been chasing shows up when we stop chasing it and start giving... giving even what it may feel like we can't give because we don't really know that **we have it ourselves...**

Oh, get ready... I love this ... & If you read on... YOU ARE GOING TO LOVE THIS ALSO.

Let's begin with a man named Job...

JOB: WHEN YOU STOP STARING AT YOUR PAIN

Reading the amazing & hard to know what to say about the story of Job. the loss, suffering, and the endless questions are something we both somewhat relate to and truly hope never happens to us. Most all of us have lived through sleepless nights, confusion, and the well-intentioned but “why can’t you just leave me alone,” kinda friends ... that somehow managed to just make everything worse.

But where the story becomes worthy of celebration and begins to speak directionally to each of us...is this...

"The Lord restored his fortunes
and gave him twice as much as he had before...
after Job had prayed for his friends."

(Job 42:10 *niv*)

That little phrase is sometimes overloaded due to the horrors that we have just read about in his life...

But significantly... “AFTER” Job prayed for his friends.

Think about that for a moment.

Job had every reason to focus on himself.

- His losses were real.
- His pain was real.
- His questions were real.
- His wife’s “*just give up & die now*” advice was real (thank God we’re not married into that – right!?)

Yet somewhere, somehow, in the middle of his suffering, God invited him to turn his attention toward others.

The miracle did not begin when Job finally understood everything.

The miracle began when Job stopped demanding answers and started offering compassion.

- There is something healing about praying for someone else's marriage while yours is struggling.
- There is something freeing about encouraging another believer while your own heart feels heavy. There is something profoundly Christ-like about carrying someone else's burden while you are still carrying your own.

The world teaches us to chase happiness by looking inward.

Jesus leads us toward joy by looking outward.

If you are still waiting for peace, try this:
find someone who is hurting and pray for them.

Not because your pain doesn't matter, but because sometimes God begins healing our hearts while we are helping carry the burdens of others.
Joy often begins where self-absorption ends.

Grab A Towel;

Three Ways to Follow Jesus When Life Doesn't Make Sense

Practical Questions & Application

1. Who needs my prayers right now?

Job's breakthrough began when he prayed for others.

Application:

Pray for one hurting person every day this week.

2. Am I focused on my pain or my purpose?

Pain demands our attention. Purpose redirects it.

Application:

Do one practical thing for someone else today.

- Encourage them.
- Help them.
- Serve them.

3. How can I give away the very thing I'm hoping to receive?

- Need encouragement? Encourage someone.
- Need kindness? Show kindness.
- Need hope? Give hope.

Application:

Ask yourself: "Who can I help today?" Then do it.
Sometimes joy arrives while we're busy giving it away.

THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH: SERVING BEFORE THE MIRACLE

The widow of Zarephath was down to her last meal.

She wasn't planning for next year. She wasn't working on personal growth. She wasn't building a better future.

She was gathering sticks to prepare what she believed would be her final meal for herself and her son.

Then Elijah arrived.

His request almost sounds unreasonable.

"First make a small loaf of bread for me." (1 Kings 17:13)

This “wonderful widdle widow woman” wasn't just battling hunger. She HAD to have been battling fear.

Elijah was from a different nation, a different background, and served a God she would've likely known little about.

Yet somehow she found the courage to trust God's voice even when it came through someone she never expected.

Many of us are waiting for certainty before we obey.

The widow teaches us that obedience often comes first, and understanding follows later.

Imagine the thoughts racing through her mind.

- What about my son?
- What about my future?
- What about my needs?

Yet she obeyed.

- Before the miracle.
- Before the breakthrough.
- Before the overflowing supply.

She chose to serve. And then & ONLY THEN ... the remarkable happened.

- The jar of flour did not run dry.
- The jug of oil did not fail.

God met her in her obedience.

Many people spend years waiting until they feel better before they begin serving others.

- When my finances improve...
- When my marriage improves...
- When my emotions improve...
- When my life settles down...

Then I'll help somebody else.

The widow teaches us a different lesson.

Sometimes the miracle is discovered on **the other side of obedience.**

Sometimes (*really feels like most-times*) joy is found while serving in the middle of our own uncertainty.

This doesn't mean ignoring your problems. It means refusing to allow your problems to become the center of your universe.

Look around.

There is someone Jesus loves who needs encouragement today.

There is someone who needs a prayer, a phone call, a helping hand, or a kind word.

Serve anyway.

The miracle may not happen exactly the way you expect.

But don't be surprised if, while helping someone else, you discover that God has quietly begun restoring something inside of you.

God moved this this WONDERFUL Woman from Scarcity to an ABUNDANCE mindset through her one acts of sacrificial service... **this is what I want for YOU**

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Three Ways to Follow Jesus When Life Doesn't Make Sense

Practical Questions & Application

1. What fear is holding me back?

The widow had to trust God before she saw the miracle.

Application:

Name the fear. Then take one small step of obedience anyway.

2. What am I waiting on before I start serving?

The widow served before her circumstances improved.

Application:

Help someone this week, even if your own situation isn't fixed yet.

3. What has God already placed in my hands?

The widow didn't have much, but she used what she had.

Application:

Use one gift, resource, or opportunity you already have to bless someone else today.

THE EMMAUS ROAD: REVELATION AFTER THE SHARING

2 down in the dumps discouraged disciples walked the road to Emmaus.

Their hopes & dreams, investment of time and probably money... had been shattered/seemingly wasted...

The One they believed would change everything had been crucified & died...

They were confused, disappointed, and heading home carrying hearts full of unanswered questions.

Then Jesus joined them.

Ironically, they didn't recognize Him.

He walked with them.

He listened to them.

He taught them.

Yet they still could not see who He was.

Then something changed.

"As they sat down to eat, He took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened." (Luke 24:30-31 NIV)

Their revelation came at the table.

- It came in the sharing. *Jesus became familiar to them when He did what He was always doing "SERVING"*
- It came in the giving.
- It came while bread was being broken and distributed.

Many believers are waiting for some dramatic moment when joy suddenly appears out of nowhere. But most often joy arrives in much quieter ways.

It arrives while serving a meal.

- While sharing a burden.
- While opening a door.
- While encouraging a friend.
- While helping someone else carry a load.

The disciples found Jesus not while obsessing over their disappointment but while participating in fellowship and sharing.

The same is often true for us.

The quickest path to misery is constantly asking, "How do I feel?"

The path toward joy often begins with a different question:

"Who can I bless today?"

The strange mystery of God's Kingdom is that joy grows when it is given away.

The more tightly we clutch it, the more elusive it becomes.

The more freely we share God's love with others, the more we discover that He has been walking beside us all along.

Grab A Towel;

Three Ways to Follow Jesus When Life Doesn't Make Sense

Practical Questions & Application

1. Who can I bless today?

The disciples found Jesus while sharing a meal.

Application:

Do one kind thing for someone today.

2. Am I focused on my disappointment or on helping someone else?

The disciples stopped staring at their loss and started sharing.

Application:

Encourage one person who may be struggling.

3. Where might Jesus already be at work in my life?

Jesus was walking with them long before they recognized Him.

Application:

Look for one evidence of God's presence or blessing today and thank Him for it.

THE Old Wood Gatherer: The REALIZATION of HAPPINESS

This has long been a favorite painting displayed at the Milwaukee art museum - **Le Père Jacques (The Wood Gatherer)** by Jules Bastien-Lepage. It was painted in **1881**, exhibited in Paris in 1882, and eventually became part of the collection of the Milwaukee Art Museum.

Bastien-Lepage was one of the leading painters of the **Naturalist** movement. Rather than painting kings, generals, or mythological heroes, he painted ordinary people doing ordinary work.

The Real People In The Painting

The old man wasn't a model hired for the day. According to the historical notes, the wood gatherer was actually a friend of the artist's family, and the little girl was his granddaughter. That gives the painting a very personal feel.

What Art Historians Notice

Most critics focus on the contrasts:

- Old age vs. youth
- Work vs. play
- Burden vs. freedom
- Death vs. life
- Duty vs. delight

The old man is bent beneath a huge load of wood.

My TAKE on this:

At first glance, everyone wants to be the little girl.

She dances through the meadow, gathering flowers, enjoying the freedom and wonder of youth. Her future stretches endlessly before her. The world feels safe. The air feels warm. Her hands are filled with beauty.

But my eyes have always been drawn to the old man.

Bent beneath a bundle of sticks, his weathered face tells a different story. He has known hard winters and scorching summers. He has felt disappointment, loss, fatigue, and pain. The years have left their mark on the deeply engraved life lines in his face.

Yet he keeps walking.



The little girl scarcely notices the burden he carries. She is too young to understand that her freedom is being sustained by someone else's sacrifice.
She does not yet know the cold.
She does not yet know what it means to carry a load so that another might be warm.
But the old man knows. Every stick upon his back is an act of love. Every step is service.
Every burden carried is a gift to someone he loves.
And perhaps that is why I find him so compelling.
The little girl is enjoying the day.
The old man is making tomorrow possible.

So... in closing

My prayer for you is that you would stop waiting for joy...
and start walking toward it.

Find someone Jesus loves.

Grab A Bucket and a Towel, Roll up your sleeves and be the example of Jesus that He has called you to be

Go find someone to serve
 & lovingly
 & patiently
 serve them.

Then watch & listen to what happens, to what the humbly THRILLING voice of Jesus starts to say inside your own heart.

Lovingly intended to add value to your own experience of what all of Heaven is so excited about seeing in your own story...
Praying for you in Jesus name...

Your friend & fan
steve rogers

steve, has spent more than 35 years helping people discover hope, purpose, and joy through a relationship with JESUS CHRIST.

He is the author of [*The Realization of Happiness*](#) (*the resource this PDF supports*)

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