

Leaping for Joy!

Isaiah 40:1-11

Our text is a great prophecy concerning the coming of Christ. In verses 3-4 we are told of someone, “a voice in the wilderness,” who will announce the Christ and prepare people to receive Him – people He can use to build His kingdom. That man is later known to be known as John the Baptist. If we look for John in the New Testament we are certainly going to see him fulfilling this prophecy in places like Matthew 3:1-3,11-12 and John 1:6-7,19-29. But the first time John ever announced Christ might be a bit of a surprise. John wasn’t even born yet! See Luke 1:5-17,39-44, where the babe leaped for joy within Elizabeth’s womb (let’s call it “Prenatal Praise”). John was filled with God’s Spirit, even while in the womb (Luke 1:15). Without words, the joy of a child announced the presence of The Lord Jesus Christ.

As we think of Christ’s first coming, we need to announce Christ through the Gospel. We should be trying to prepare people for Christ’s second coming. May we learn from John the Baptist’s testimony that it is our joy in the Lord that will make us effective with others.

- The Joy of the Lord is our example – Hebrews 12:1-3
- The Joy of the Lord is our strength – Nehemiah 8:10 cp Psalm 89:15
- The Joy of the Lord is our key to worship – **Psalm 16:11; 27:6; 32:11; 35:9; 95:1-2**; Philippians 4:4
- The Joy of the Lord is our testimony – **Luke 6:20-23**; John 16:1-3,20-22,33; Acts 13:49-52; 20:22-24; 24:(1-9)**10**; II Corinthians 8:1-2; I Thessalonians 1:5-8; I Peter 1:3-9; 4:12-14.

How do I get this kind of joy? How do I maintain it?

- Remember that it is necessary to become like a child in Christ’s Kingdom.
See Matthew 18:1-5, 10-11; Ephesians 5:1-2.
- Remember that joy comes from faith – believing the Scriptures.
See Romans 15:4,13; I John 1:4; John 15:7-11.
- Remember it is the Joy **of the Lord!** You have to get it from Him. Psalm 51:12

Perhaps a key to this joy is found in Psalm 73:23-28. It is a question of your deepest desires on earth and for all eternity. What really matters to you? What (or who) is your reason for living? See Philippians 1:20-21; Colossians 1:1-17. May you find the Joy of the Lord: a joy that the world cannot give or take away.