

joy is characteristic of Christianity; but it  
cannot just be turned on at will. Joy is based  
on knowledge, knowing for example that God has  
forgiveness for all our sins. There is nothing so  
satisfying as a guilty conscience but a Christian  
knows that his sins have been forgiven for Jesus  
Christ's sake. Jesus bore our sins on the cross  
and God has said that he has our sins behind  
his back. (1st John 1:7) that he has forgiven them  
us through his blood. (1st John 1:9) as if  
he no longer were there. They are no longer  
present to him and as they do not eat our flesh  
with him in Jesus in our hearts. When we  
realize that God forgives us completely for  
Christ's sake when we see him for this forgive-  
ness, and make Jesus our Lord and God, there  
comes a peace to our conscience and joy to our  
heart. The joy of God's forgiveness. Have you  
ever longed for Jesus your Lord.

JOY

Another source of Christian joy is fellowship  
with God. When God's Spirit is  
in our hearts and we have personal fellowship  
with him. This fellowship is a real and joyful  
experience. There is a third ground for Christ  
joy and that is the knowledge about our future  
which God's word gives us. This future is based  
on God's promises and clearly revealed intentions  
of salvation and blessing. (1st John 1:2)  
10:27 said his disciples (who were rejoicing in  
the successful results of their preaching) not  
to rejoice in that, for the real ground of their  
rejoicing should be in the fact that God had  
for them a future. He said

"THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

Rejoice that your names are written in Heaven.  
There are numerous references in the New Testament  
to this joy that Christians have as they consider  
God's glorious provision for all who put their  
faith in Christ, even in promises there is an  
underlying joy. Are you conscious of it? You

Joy is characteristic of Christianity; but it cannot just be turned on at will. Joy is based on knowledge, knowing for example that God has forgiven us all our sins. There is nothing so nagging as a guilty conscience; but a Christian knows that his sins have been forgiven for Jesus Christ's sake. Jesus bore our sins on the cross and God has said that He has put our sins behind His back, (Is. 38:17) that He has blotted them out as though with a thick cloud, (Is. 44:22) so that He no longer sees them. They are no longer present to Him and so they do not mar our fellowship with Him if Jesus is our Lord. When we realise that God forgives us completely for Christ's sake when we ask Him for this forgiveness, and make Jesus our Lord and boss, there comes a peace to our conscience and joy to our hearts. The joy of God's forgiveness. Have you experienced it? Make Jesus Lord.

Another source of Christian joy is fellowship with God. When we are forgiven God's Spirit is in our hearts and we have personal fellowship with Him. This fellowship is a real and joyful experience. There is a third ground for Christian joy and that is the knowledge about our future which God's word gives us. This future is based on God's promised and clearly revealed intentions of salvation and blessing. Thus Jesus in Luke 10:27 told His disciples (who were rejoicing in the successful results of their preaching) not to rejoice in that, for the real ground of their rejoicing should be in the fact that God had for them a sure blessing in the future. He said "Rejoice that your names are written in Heaven". There are numerous references in the New Testament to this joy that Christians have as they contemplate God's glorious provision for all who put their faith in Christ; even in troubles there is an underlying joy. Are you conscious of it? You

should be if you are a Christian. So lift up your head and remember and think about and rejoice in the heavenly blessing that God has for you.

Christian joy is based on the knowledge of God's goodness in forgiveness and fellowship with Him and in His future purposes for us. But if we forget these things or if our knowledge is defective it is not surprising that the joy evaporates. For example, one of the most important doctrines is that Christ is Lord over everything. If we do not realise that God controls everything in our life and that He controls everything for good, we may well become overwhelmed by events. So true doctrine is the ground for Christian joy, because the source of Christian joy is not the events of life so much as the underlying attitude which springs from knowledge of God's purposes which we obtain from the Bible and from nowhere else. So we need to correct and fill out our knowledge of God from the Bible, if we are to "rejoice in the Lord always".

I may illustrate this from the doctrine of purgatory taught in the Roman Catholic Church. At death the Christian enters into the joy of his Lord. Fortunately the Bible knows nothing of the doctrine of Purgatory. There is not a word about it in either the Old or the New Testaments. Indeed the New Testament excludes the possibility of purgatory. In Revelation 13 we read "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth, for they rest from their labours".

If then we are to follow the Bible's call to rejoice in the Lord so that our Christian life is characterised by joy, it is very important that our knowledge of God should be true; for wrong doctrine banishes joy. But if our doctrines are to be true they must be Scriptural.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

is broadcast every Sunday at  
7.15 p.m. over Radio 2CH

Copies of these weekly broadcasts may  
be obtained (\$5 per year posted) by  
writing to The Christian Faith, c/-  
2CH, York Street, Sydney N.S.W. 2000

10/12/72 34/72

REBROADCAST 6/5/79 18/79