

Oh for Joy!

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**Oh for Joy!**

**By Terry Dashner**

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"Joyful Worship"

May I ask you a question? What does worship mean to you? Is your desire to worship God similar to King David's? The Psalmist said that he so desired God that his heart would "pant" like a deer that thirsts after water. David praised God precisely for the joy of seeing and savoring God! Worship is nothing less than obedience to the command of God, "Delight thy self in the Lord..." (Psalm 37:4).

Here's an interesting thought. Pastor John Piper says, "The great hindrance to worship is not that we are a pleasure-seeking people, but that we are willing to settle for such pitiful pleasures." Some would rather stay home from church and work the yard than attend worship services. The message being sent is that yard work is much more pleasing than God. Again, we settle for far too little pleasure. The greatest pleasure on earth can be experienced in 30 minutes of radical, heart-felt praise unto God. In His presence is joy. At His right hand are pleasures forevermore. The greatest reward we can receive in this life or the next is God Himself.

Many Christians think "things" can satisfy their souls. They go to God with a heart-felt request for some "thing." When God, in His infinite mercy, gives it to them, they rejoice over the "thing." The answer to their request becomes the reason for their joy. They never advance beyond seeking the HAND of God when they should seek first His FACE. If you ask only for a HAND-out, God gives you only what's in His hand; however, if you worship the Lord simply for the sheer joy of His presence, you'll get not only His presence but what's in His hands also. It's time for the Body of Christ to start panting after God. He's looking for radical praisers.

May I make a suggestion how you might transform a superficial praise into life-changing worship. For powerful worship in church, I recommend that you come famished for God. Jesus Christ is the Bread of Life, and I'm a big bread eater. I butter bread. I toast bread. I sop bread in gravy. I prepare my bread with jelly and honey, and I scarf it down. Yes, I'm a bread eating man. When I go to worship, I'm hungry for a move of God. I'm praising Him, hoping to be enveloped in His manifested presence. When

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His presence falls on me, my words and actions are different. They are anointed because of His presence. The Holy Spirit moves upon me, and then I move against the enemy. The devil hates victorious praises unto our God. Because of that truth, I want to live in a state of worship and praise.

I want to give you one word of warning in closing. You simply can't say to God, "I want to be satisfied in You so that I can have something else." That would mean that you are not really satisfied in God but in the something else. And that dishonors God. Genuine affections for God are an end in themselves. I cannot say to my wife: "I feel a strong delight in you—so that you will make me a nice meal." That is not the way delight works. It terminates on her. It does not have a nice meal in view. I cannot say to my son, "I love playing ball with you—so that you will cut the grass." If your heart really delights in playing with him, that delight cannot be performed as a means to getting him to do something.

Life in Christ is good, but there are many battles to fight because we are at war. The casualties are millions, and the stakes are eternal. What we need today is not a call to simplicity, but a call to war. We need to think in terms of a "wartime lifestyle" rather than a "simple lifestyle." Paul said in I Timothy 6:8, "If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content." A life focused on God—making God the central issue of our lives—is a life that is victorious over every battle in life. Why? Because a God centered believer knows that only God can fight his battles for him if he expects to win. I think it's time to worship. So, I'll leave you for now and return tomorrow recharged and ready to take on a new day.

Keep the faith. Stay the course. Jesus is coming soon. Pastor Terry Dashner. (Sources cited available)

Pastors a small church in Broken Arrow, OK. He is published in several law enforcement magazines. He retired from the Tulsa Police Department in September 2003. (918-451-0270)

## **Naming And Claiming**

**By Stephanie West Allen**

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#### A Joy-propelled Life For You

Name yourself joy for today. Or maybe make joy your middle name. Make joy as much a part of you as your name is. Why? Because a joy-propelled life is an extraordinary life.

Joyful people create astounding lives for themselves. Their joy makes them lighthouses attracting shiploads of delight. And their joy makes them beacons showing others the way.

Joy's A Buffer, A Bonfire

## Oh for Joy!

Joy is like a shield from the negatives in life. Joyful people are protected from joyless things such as ailments, pauperism, and sluggishness. Joy brings energy and insight to do grand, glorious, and gifted deeds. Joyful people are having too much fun and are too full of vim and verve for dismal, Drama Zone conditions.

People are attracted to the joy in others and people just feel good making their joyful associates even more joyful and successful. Joy is catching and communicable and contagious. One joyful person in a room or company or family can ignite a whole group. The fire of joy can burn away all things negative.

Wow! That joy is mighty powerful. Name yourself joy. Proclaim yourself joy! Today!

### Where Do I Go To Get This Joy?

Two very effective ways to quickly create joy in yourself? Gratitude and memory. Look around at your life and make a list -- in writing -- of all the things for which you are grateful. Add to the list whenever you get chance. If you find yourself dwelling on what you lack, read your list. Make that growing list a part of you and it will grow even faster. Sing your list, waltz with it, write it in all your favorite colors.

And sit down frequently and think of times when you were

most joyful. Truly remember them and feel them. Infuse yourself with the joy of those memories. Let the joy from your past leap forward from memory into now. Catch the leaping joy with a smile and wear it inside and out. Then jump for joy as you become practiced in calling joy to you any time you desire.

Increasing the number of people living in joy has a positive impact on our workplaces and our communities. One who invites joy into his or her life also invites greater wellness, fortune, and success. As joy increases in our business organizations, those organizations become healthier, wealthier, and more successful. And, as joy expands in our society, it will become a place more inclusive, productive, and peaceful. This joy is potent stuff.

### Daily Exercise

## Oh for Joy!

Naming can be much like claiming. Think of a trait you would like to claim for yourself -- if not joy, then maybe health, wealth, success, happiness, peace, kindness, the big, blue sky is the limit. For today, call yourself, name yourself, that trait. Maybe "I am health." Or "I am kindness." Stand up tall and say, "I am [your chosen name]" at least once an hour today. Sing it in the shower. Shout it with glee in the park.

Write it down each hour, too. "I am [your chosen name]."  
All throughout the day, carry the paper with your new name close to you. Grin when you think of it in your pocket or purse or under your belt.

Don't just write it on paper. Use your finger to trace it in the air or in a pond. Write it in your food with your fork. Form your name with flowers or spell it out with jellybeans. Let today be permeated by your new name. The trait you claimed will become yours.

What will you name yourself today?

Stephanie West Allen, JD, is the author of *\_24 7 This! TheMerry Method To Accelerate Success\_*. Excerpts at <http://www.allen-nichols.com/success.cfm> She coaches people in using the two Merry Maxims, WYTUG(What You Think Upon Grows) and LULU (Loosen Up, LightenUp), to achieve health, wealth, creativity, and harmonizedrelationships. mail to:Stephanie@allen-nichols.com

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