

JOY



Yunus Ciptawilangga, M.B.A.

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I'm sure we all want to be joyful. Nobody wants to be sad and grieve, instead we want to rejoice always as long as we live, if possible.

3 Illustrations of Loss

The author does not know whether his reader is now joyful, rejoicing, or not, but he wants to give three illustrations of loss and ask us how we would react if we were to face with such problems.

100 USD

For example, if today we were to lose a 100 dollars, how would we react? Would we still have joy in our hearts? Some of us might say, *"Well, we will still have joy, Sir, but it is quite a*

pity too." Why? "If I do not lose the money, my family and I would be able to eat steak, which we had planned quite a while ago. When the money is gone, it means we have to wait again another week or two to enjoy steak." Perhaps some others would say, "Sir, if only I do not lose the money, I would cook something more delicious for my family, and I have planned to cook seafood." Thus could be the answers of most of us.

Next, we ask the same question to Mr. X. "Sir, how would you react, if you were to lose a 100 dollars? He replies, *"Well, no problem. I just consider it as giving a tip to someone. I planned to give 10 dollars, yet by mistake I have given him 100 dollars instead. But that's all right with me. "*

100.000 USD

Now the second case, *"Sir, if you were to lose a 100,000 dollars, how would you react? Would you still have joy?"*

Perhaps there are among us who answer, *"Well, I would be very sad and lose my joy, because I have lived frugally for many years to save for the down payment of a house."* Or someone else may say, *"Wow, this would be hard for me, because the money is to provide me for in my old age. If I lose it I do not know what would happen to me later on."*

Then we ask that very same question to Mr. X, *"Sir, if you were to lose a 100,000 dollars, how would you react?"* Mr. X replies, *"Well, no problem, I would not worry about it."*

100.000.000 USD

Now the third case. *"What if you were to lose a 100 million dollars?"* Maybe most of us would answer, *"Losing a 100 million dollars? Wow, I would not be able to bear it, Sir, because all my wealth does not reach that amount. So if I have to lose or owe 100 million dollars, well, I can not imagine how*

my life would be. I would have to pay it off by working and until I die my debt would never be settled. They can send me debt-collectors, even sue me and throw me into jail. Surely the grief of my life would be unfathomable. There would be no joy in my life. I could never rejoice, and might even want to kill myself, to commit suicide. "

Then we ask again to Mr. X, *"Sir, if you were to lose a 100 million dollars, how would you feel?"* Mr. X replies, *"Well I would feel somewhat annoyed, regretting also why I could lose that much money, but so be it."*

Why would those people mentioned in the illustrations, who represent most of us, generally give a negative response as told above, whereas Mr. X who also were to lose a 100 million dollars did not seem to matter, whatsoever? If we consider why so, it is because Mr. X were Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of the Facebook, with his wealth of 45 billion

dollars! So if he were to lose a 100 million dollars, his fortune would still remain 44 billion 900 million dollars!

What does the author want to convey here? The few or plenty material possessions, or the wealth we own, will affect the degree of grief of a loss. For certain people losing a 100 dollars can make them very sad, if that is all they have. If the money is gone, they can not eat for a few days, can they? But for those who have a lot of money, losing a 100 million dollars is no problem at all, since they still have plenty left. This is a joy based on wealth we own.

Rejoice Always

Earlier at the beginning it was conveyed that every human being wants to be joyful, and if possible we even want to rejoice always as long as we live. *"Is it possible for someone in this world to always rejoice in any circumstance?"* Most of

us would probably answer that no man can rejoice always, though the Bible explains that we can. How so? Let's study this issue step by step.

Everlasting joy starts from the birth of Jesus, which is written among others in Luke 2: 8-14

*8 "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of **great joy, which shall be of all people**. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David **a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord**. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and **on earth peace, good will toward men.**" (KJV)*

Or

8 *“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of **great joy that will be for all the people.** 11 Today in the town of David **a Saviour** has been born to you; **He is Christ the Lord.** 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find the baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.’ 13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 ‘Glory to God in the highest, and **on earth peace to men on whom his favor rest.**’”* (NIV)

The above passage presents at least three issues:

1. "Great joy which shall be of all people." (10)
2. "Unto you is born a Savior" (11)

3. "On earth peace, good will toward men on whom his favor rests" (14)

Joy and Peace

The birth of Jesus **brought great joy for all the people (the whole nation)**, because His birth was the fulfillment of God's promise concerning salvation for all human beings, not just for a particular tribe or nation as in the Torah where it seems as if salvation was intended solely for the Israelites. **However, the birth of the Lord Jesus is for all nations.** Hence in the verse we read that *the great joy shall be for all people, because this day is born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David.*

The birth of Jesus is an very important issue, but there are issues no less important delivered in the next verse, namely:

2:14 “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men (on whom his favor rests).*” (KJV)

Or “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rest.*” (NIV)

What does it mean “*peace to men on whom his favor rest?*” (NIV) . Two previous verses said that there would be great joy, because salvation was prepared for all nations, continued by the conception: only if they/we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, we would then receive peace and become people who please God. And the peace given is not a mere common peace, but an endless peace as described in:

Isaiah 9:6 “*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to*

order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

The central idea of Isaiah’s prophecy is about the perfect and unending peace under the rule of the Messiah. That peace occurs through God’s grace by giving His Son to die to take away the sin of the world which means to remove sin, doing away with the guilt and punishment.

The Difference between Joy and Peace

If we look at three previous verses in Luke 2 quoted above, there is a difference between joy and peace. In the King James Bible we read about the good tidings of great "joy". Usually we have joy, or are joyful, when dealing with certain people, for example, when we meet with our loved ones, or when we gather together with people who like jokes and

laughter, play with our grandchildren and other pleasant people. We also are joyful when we achieve something, such as graduated from college, promoted to a better position, can get our jobs well done and other achievements. Again, we are joyful, or rejoice, when we can enjoy something: eat delicious food, watch movies/shows, go for a picnic/tour and find other source of enjoyment. Then naturally we are joyful, when we get worldly things like a new car, a new house, a bonus, gifts and other objects. To have joy is also connected with our personal condition: when we recover from illness, feel loved, have good sense organs, healthy body, slim body, and so on.

Three Pictures of Peace

The word "peace" in the King James Bible derives from the Greek word "eirene". What is this peace actually? It was told that once upon a time there was a king who held a

painting competition and the theme was "Peace". After selecting so many paintings yielded, there were finally three best ones which were handed over to the king to choose the best.

The first painting showed a quiet clear blue lake. On it was a small boat with someone whistling while fishing and the soft breeze blowing under the bright blue sky. *"This is peace,"* said the first painter.

Then the second painting showed a green mountain, a cool atmosphere with rice fields, the bright sun, shady trees, and two persons sitting under a tree, laughing happily. *"This is peace,"* said the second painter.

Then the third painting showed a vast stormy sea, black colored, the hurricane, the dark sky with strokes of lightning everywhere. In the midst of that darkness and the violent storm a rock was seen hit by the waves. There was a hole on

that rockside where a sparrow was detected singing cheerfully.
"*This is peace,*" said the third painter.

The king chose the third painting as depicting "Peace", because peace is not a condition when all is comfortable without any problems, but as such in which one still can have joy or rejoice amidst a stormy life, just as that little bird still can sing in the dark stormy environment.

Peace in the Lord

Why is it said that there is peace when we receive the Lord Jesus in our hearts? Because when we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior, our sins are forgiven. Thus we will not be punished for our sins, and besides, our relationship with God will be restored. We are even adopted as God's son/child and we can call Him "*Father*".

Romans 5:8 *”But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us.***

9 *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, **we shall be saved from (God’s) wrath through him.***

10 *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

11 *And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **by whom we have now received the atonement.**”*

Romans 8:15 *”For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”*

Hence by Jesus’ death we sinners who received Him as our Redeemer are saved from God’s wrath or condemnation.

And this salvation is so precious and invaluable.

Matthew 16:26 *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

The above verse explains that salvation is much more valuable than the whole world, for although we own the whole world, such wealth can not or is not sufficient to buy salvation. So like Mark Zuckerberg, the reason he would not lose his joy when he had to lose a 100 million dollars, was that he owned a wealth of 45 billion dollars. We also should not lose our joy, because we have something invaluable surpassing Mark Zuckerberg's wealth. In addition, we still can have peace like the bird in that painting, because the bird was sure that the rock where she stood would not collapse even though hit by waves of any size. We should have the same attitude, knowing that in Jesus Christ, the spiritual Rock we are safe. Matthew 28:20 says, *"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have*

commended you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

If we really believe that God will be with us until the end of time, there is absolutely no need for us to worry; we can still have peace and joy under any circumstances. Therefore, most important in our life is to have peace, or in other terms, we need to have received salvation, to have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. If we already have Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, we will have *joy, and live joyfully* .

**Righteousness, Peace,
and Joy in the Holy Spirit**

Romans 14:17 *”For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”*

Salvation is connected with three things: righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Righteousness

Righteousness is God's word, God's promise or God's revelation.

John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

Salvation refers to whether we believe that God has given His only begotten Son to be our Savior. Do we believe this?

Acts 4:12 *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."*

God's word says that salvation is found only in Jesus. Are we convinced of that Word ?

Then in Romans 10:9 we read, *"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."*

The above verse explains that we will be saved, or receive salvation, if we confess with our tongues that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God has raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

Further, Ephesians 2: 8-9 states that salvation is by grace through faith and is a free gift to those who put their faith or who believe in that gift. Salvation is not due to human efforts, because we of ourselves will not be able to atone for all our sins.

Ephesians 2:8 *“For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*

Peace

When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we will obtain peace as explained, among others, in Romans 5:10.

Roma5:10 *“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”*

Hence previously, because of our sins, we were enemies of God. But when we receive the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer, we are not only reconciled to God, but our lives are saved.

Colossians 1:21-22 also explains,

1:21 *"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight."*

We will obtain peace since our relationship with God has been restored and we are promised to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Joy in the Holy Spirit

Joy is the expression of peace. Peace is rather difficult to be seen, but it is obvious from its expression in the form of joy.

We have joy because of two things at least:

First, we have joy, because we have no fear, even no fear of death. So under any circumstance we are not afraid. Why? Because our sins have been forgiven. Therefore we have no

fear for punishment, yet have the assurance to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven instead.

Second, we also have no fear because we are convinced that God will always watch over us and take care of us.

In 1 John 4:18, we can read also about this same subject,
”There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”

The word “*love*” used here is from the Greek word “*agape*”, the love of God. As we accept God's love, which is a gift from God by sending His Son to die a sacrificial death to take away the sin of the world, meaning to redeem us (the world) from our sins. We will then have no fear anymore, since the sacrifice of Jesus our Lord has washed away all our sins and this eliminates the fear of God's punishment. Furthermore, if we are convinced that we have received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, but still have fear, then surely there is something

wrong in our concept about salvation, and this is discussed in the author's book entitled *Fruit of the Spirit*. Please read the book.

Joy and Peace in the Reign of Antichrist

This theme of joy and peace is an important theme for us to understand, particularly these days when we are to enter the era of the reign of antichrist. Why? Because, according to the author, now is the time we have to be willing to let go of our possessions.

Matthew 10:23 says,

“But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.” (KJV)

Or *“When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”* (NIV)

This is one of the commands given when antichrist appears. We can flee when the situation is not too chaotic, so we can still bring along some of our possessions although hardly likely all of our properties. But the situation can also change so quickly and suddenly, that we must flee immediately from home and leave everything we have. Our fate would not be different from the Yazidis who were forced to flee from their homes when their territory in Nineveh, a province in northern Iraq, was dominated by ISIS that force them to renounce their faith and follow the belief of ISIS. They had to leave the city immediately in such a hurried state that they could take nothing along!

So when the antichrist holds the reign, we have to readily let go of all our possessions. And not only that, perhaps even our families, because when we have to run we may not be able to run with our family members. In Matthew 24:9, the Lord Jesus said, *“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake.”* (KJV)

Or *“At that time you will be handed over to be persecuted, and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me”*. (NIV)

At that time we might be tortured and even lose our lives. However we would be able to survive, even to have joy or still rejoice, when we realize that we have received the salvation, something invaluable, so much more precious than any other possessions, families or even our lives. Just like the earlier example at the beginning, when we make pretense to have lost 100 dollars up to 100 million dollars, we still can have peace

and joy. Why? Because we have something much more precious and valuable than the entire world.

True knowledge of the Value of Salvation

Having the true knowledge of the value of salvation is something important for us to conceive. Therefore we need to study it properly so that in time of persecution, being hated or even killed, we still can have joy or rejoice. So we will experience what the Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:4 *"Rejoice in the Lord **always**: and again I say, Rejoice."*

The statement was not conveyed to the Philippians at that time only, but also to us at this time, and again to us later whenever we live in the era of antichrist. If we understand truly the value of salvation, then we certainly can rejoice in the Lord always.

**Whatever Situation We are in,
Our Joy Can Not be Robbed from Us**

In 2 Corinthians 6:10, the Apostle Paul stated that Christians, *"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."* This means that even in the midst of a situation that makes us grieve, our inner joy would never vanish or cease to exist. Our personal being is inherently always full of joy and rejoicing, because we are God's children whose sins are forgiven and continually enjoying an intimate relationship with the Creator. Our joy grows stronger when we remember that whatever situations we are facing, God, our heavenly Father, is with us and He will overcome them all.

We will experience joy in this life when we accept the gift of God's grace and surrender our lives completely in His hands.

When we truly live in Him, we will experience the fullness of His joy as He said, *“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” (John 15:11)*

We will still have joy and be able to rejoice when we lose all that we have, even our lives, because we realize that we have something very precious and invaluable, namely the assurance of our eternal life.

Luke 10:20b *“..., but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.”*