

RESTORE MY JOY, OH LORD!

By Pastor Greg Hooker

"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ..." (Psalm 51:12).

Do you remember the time when you first said yes to the Lord and accepted Jesus Christ into your heart and were born-again? Oh, the wonderful joy that flooded our souls! It was as if the flood gates of peace burst open and ran like mighty rivers washing away the years of guilt and condemnation of sin. The love of God rushed into your heart as the Holy Spirit took up permanent residence and filled that 'empty spot' you had been trying to fill with everything and anything that came along. What a joyous day that was!

Then something disastrous started happening; reality sets in! The flesh and the allurements of the world began lifting their ugly heads and whispering in your ear, 'Oh please! You can't be serious about this Jesus thing!' 'What will your friends think when you tell them you have become a Christian?' 'People are going to laugh and make fun of you everywhere you go!'

You see, the fact of the matter is; it doesn't take long for the 'newness' of our salvation experience to 'wear off' if we let it! The toll of the world, flesh and the Devil begins eroding what God has begun in our lives and before long we become discouraged, depressed and feel like we are done for! Now don't look at me that way, you know what I'm talking about! Every one of us have, at one point in our lives, become 'back slidden' and lost the 'joy' of our salvation experience!

Young David, in the Psalm quoted above, found himself in this position. Notice carefully what he did; he cried out with a soul-searching cry unto the Lord, *"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ..."* While it is important 'what' he said, it is equally important 'what he didn't say'. David did not say 'restore my salvation', but "restore the **JOY** of my salvation."

Even with all the terrible sins David had committed (lying, murder, adultery, stealing, anger and more) he never once thought for a minute that he 'lost' his salvation. He knew you cannot lose something that is eternal! So he cried out to the Lord to 'restore my JOY! My sins are ever before me and my heart is so heavy I cannot go on, dear Lord, unless you restore my joy!'

Have you been in David's shoes before? I know I have – many times! The world, flesh and the Devil have a way of robbing us of our joy, thus causing us to become defeated, depressed and down-right-miserable! It is in those moments that we repent of our sins and cry out, "restore the 'joy' of my salvation"!

My friends, I'm here to tell you; you can experience the joy of the Lord if you will simply live close to Him and establish a daily relationship with the Father. He loves you and desires that your *"joy may be full"*!

Dear Heavenly Father, many times we slip back into our old habits and sins and begin suffering in our relationship to you. Please forgive us and restore the joy that we once had when we were first saved. In Jesus name, Pastor Greg.