



Rejoicing in the Lord! - 15

(1) AS CHRISTIANS, TO WHOM ARE WE TO REPRESENT CHRIST'S GOODNESS, MERCY, AND LOVE?

Isaiah 12:4, 5

Related Texts: Isaiah 66:19; John 17:18; 1 Chronicles 16:8; Psalm 9:11; 96:3; 105:1; 107:22

As children of God it is our privilege to show the rest of the world what Jesus is like; we should show the goodness and mercy of the Lord. Just as Jesus has shown us the true character of the Father, we are to show what Jesus is like to a world that does not know His tender, pitying love. "As Thou hast sent Me into the world," said Jesus, "even so have I also sent them into the world." "I in them, and Thou in

Me; . . . that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me." John 17: 18, 23.

(2) WHEN WE ACCEPT AND FOLLOW CHRIST, WHAT ROLE ARE WE TO FULFILL?

2 Corinthians 3:2, 3

Related Texts: 1 Peter 3:15; Acts 4:20; Romans 1:8, 16, 17; 1 Thessalonians 1:8

In every one of His children, Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ's follower, He sends you as a letter to your family, your town, and the street where you live. Jesus desires to speak through you to the hearts of those who do not know Him. Perhaps they do not

read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages. They do not see the love of God through the things He does. But if you are a true example of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand what His goodness is like and be won to love and serve Him.

(3) WHAT TWO CHARACTERISTICS SHOULD OUR LIVES REFLECT AS WE, IN CHRIST'S SERVICE, BEAR LIGHT TO THE WORLD?

1 Timothy 6:6

Related Texts: Philippians 4:11; Psalm 34:5; 4:3; Galatians 5:22, 23; 1 Timothy 2:2; 4:8; 6:11; Proverbs 19:23; 30:8; Ecclesiastes 4:6

Christians are to be the bearers of light on their way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life should be such that through them others will get the right picture of Christ and His service.

If we show what Jesus is like to others, we will show that living for Him is as desirable as it really is. Christians who look on the gloomy and sad side of things, the ones who are always grumbling and complaining, are giving the wrong picture to others of what God is like and what the Christian life is. They give others the idea that God is not pleased to have His children happy, and by doing this they are not showing who our loving heavenly Father is.

(4) WHAT IS THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE THAT, IF FIXED WITHIN OUR MINDS, WILL PREVENT UNBELIEF, DESPONDENCY, AND ACCEPTANCE OF SATAN'S MISREPRESENTATIONS AGAINST GOD?

Psalm 125:1

Related Texts: Psalm 4:5; 64:10; 57:1; 40:4; 34:8; 141:8; Proverbs 29:25; 30:5; 3:5

Satan is thrilled when he can lead the children of God to stop believing and become unhappy. He is delighted when he sees us distrusting God and doubting that God is willing or that He even has the power to save us. He loves to make us think that the Lord will harm us by the way He rules. It is the goal of Satan to make others believe that the Lord does not show enough care nor have pity on us. Satan lies and fills our minds with wrong ideas about God. Instead of thinking about our heavenly Father as we should, too much of the time we think about the lies of Satan. When we do this we fail to honor God by our complaining and lack of trust. Satan is always trying to make our spiritual lives gloomy. He wants the Christian life to look difficult to others; he desires it to appear to be a lot of work. If we as Christians show this in our own lives, through our unbelief, we are telling the same lies as Satan.

(5) LIKE PAUL, WHAT SHOULD BE OUR RESPONSE AS WE EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES ALONG THE PATH OF LIFE?

2 Corinthians 12:9, 10

Related Texts: 2 Corinthians 3:5; Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 43:2-5; Jeremiah 1:6-9; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 15:10

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Many people, as they go through life, are always thinking about their mistakes and the times they have failed and been disappointed. When we think about these things our hearts become filled with sorrow and hope is weakened.

Life is like walking through a rose garden. As you pass through your experiences you can choose to focus on the briars and thorns, or the beauty of the flowers. The briars and thorns will only hurt you and cause suffering. If you only gather these things and point them out to others; aren't you keeping those around you from walking in the path of life? Aren't you taking away from the goodness of God? It is not wise to gather together all the unpleasant memories of your past life, all of the bad you have done and the disappointments you have had. It is not good to keep repeating them and mourning over them until you are overwhelmed with discouragement. If you choose this path you will be depressed and filled with darkness. It will cause the light of God to be shut out from your soul and you will then cast a shadow upon the pathway of others.

Let us as thankful Christians pass through the experiences of life dwelling on the beauty of the flowers. These are the bright spots in our lives and the precious times when our hearts throbbed with joy in response to the Spirit of God.

When you look back through the experiences of your life do you find some pleasant times? Are God's promises, like the sweet smelling flowers, growing on both sides of your path? Will you let their beauty and sweetness fill your heart with joy?

(6) WHEN AN UNWORTHY SINNER GRASPS THE PICTURE OF REDEMPTION, WHAT WILL BE HIS TESTIMONY?

Isaiah 12:4

Related Texts: Isaiah 12:5; Psalm 106:47, 48; 113:1-3; 117:1, 2; 105:1; 1 Chronicles 16:8-11

Thank God for the bright pictures which He has given to us. Let us consider all these blessed assurances of His love and always keep them in mind. The Son of God left His Father's throne and clothed His divinity with humanity so that He could come and rescue us from the power of Satan. Christ's victory opened heaven so the Glory of the Lord could be seen. The fallen race was uplifted from the pit of ruin into which sin had caused it to fall, and brought again into touch with the eternal God. And, after having endured the divine test through faith in our Redeemer, we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ and then exalted to His throne. All these are the pictures that God wants us to keep in our minds and share with others.

(7) HOW DID GOD PROVE HIS LOVE FOR US BEYOND ANY DOUBT?

Romans 8:32

Related Texts: Romans 5:6-11; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 4:10

When we doubt God's love and distrust His promises we dishonor Him and grieve His Holy Spirit. How would a mother feel if her children

were constantly complaining that she did not want what is best for them when her whole life's effort had been to do all she could to give them comfort? If they should doubt her love for them, it would break her heart. How would any parents feel to be treated this way by their children? And what does our heavenly Father think about us when we distrust His love, the love which led Him to give His only begotten Son that we might have life? And yet how many of us by our actions, if not our words, are saying, "The Lord does not mean these promises for me. Perhaps He loves others, but He does not love me."

(8) WHY SHOULD WE NOT DWELL ON THOUGHTS OF DOUBT OR SHARE DOUBT WITH OTHERS REGARDING ANY SPIRITUAL MATTER?

Romans 14:7, 13

1 Corinthians 8:9, 12

Related Texts: Luke 12:29; Matthew 12:36; Leviticus 19:14; Matthew 16:23; Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23; 1 Timothy 2:8

When we distrust the Lord it is only harming our own souls because every

word of doubt we speak is inviting Satan to tempt us. Distrust strengthens in us the tendency to doubt, and it grieves and draws the ministering angels away from us. When Satan tempts us, we should not breathe a word of doubt or darkness. If we choose to open the door to his suggestions, our minds will be filled with distrust and rebellious questions. If we talk out our feelings, every doubt we express not only has an effect on us, but it is a seed that will grow and cause doubt in the lives of others. It may be impossible to make up for the effect of our words on them. We ourselves may be able to recover from the moment of temptation and from the trap of Satan, but others who have been swayed by our influence may not be able to escape from the unbelief we have planted in them. This is why it is so important that we speak only those things that will give spiritual strength and life!

(9) WHAT SHOULD OUR CONVERSATIONS CONTAIN THAT WILL REVEAL THE SALVATION OF GOD?

Psalms 50:23

Related Texts: Psalm 50:14; 86:12; 34:1; 104:33; 1 Peter 2:9

Angels are listening to hear what you are telling the world about your heavenly Master. When you speak let it be about Jesus who lives to represent us before the Father. When you take the hand of a friend, let praise to God be on your lips and in your heart. This will attract his thoughts to Jesus.

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(10) WHAT COUNSEL DOES THE BIBLE GIVE US CONCERNING DOUBT AND DISCOURAGEMENT?

Philippians 2:14

Related Texts: Romans 12:8; 14:1; 2 Corinthians 12:19, 20; Ephesians 4:31; 1 Timothy 6:4-6

Everyone has trials, sorrows hard to bear, and temptations hard to resist. Do not tell your troubles to your fellow mortals, but carry everything to God in prayer. Make it a rule never to speak one word of doubt or discouragement. You can do much to brighten the lives of others and strengthen their efforts by words of hope and blessed comfort.

There are many brave souls being attacked by temptation. They are almost ready to give up in the battle with self and with the powers of evil. Do not discourage those that are going through these hard struggles. Cheer them up with brave, hopeful words that will help them along the road they are traveling. In this way the light of Christ may shine from you. "None of us liveth to himself." Romans 14:7. By our influence others may be encouraged and strengthened, or they may be discouraged and pushed away from Christ and the truth.

(11) IN WHOSE PRESENCE IS THE FULLNESS OF JOY AND PLEASURE FOUND?

Psalm 16:8, 11

Related Texts: Acts 2:28; Jude 24; Psalm 36:8; 4:6, 7; 17:15; 21:6; 42:5

There are many who have a false idea about the life and character of Christ. They think that He was without warmth and was not pleasant; that He was hard, severe, and without joy. In many cases their whole religious experience is affected by these gloomy views.

It is often said that Jesus wept, but that He was never known to smile. Our Saviour was indeed a "Man of Sorrows," and "acquainted with grief." This was because He opened His heart to all the troubles of men. But though His life was unselfish and shadowed with pain and care, His spirit was not crushed. His appearance did not wear an expression of sadness and gloom, but instead one of peaceful calmness. His heart was a source of life, and wherever He went He carried rest, peace, joy, and gladness.

Our Saviour was deeply serious and very earnest, but never gloomy or unhappy. The life of those who imitate Him will be full of earnest purpose and they will have a deep sense of personal responsibility. Lightness of purpose will be held back, and there will be no rough pleasure seeking and no rude joking. But instead, the faith of Jesus gives peace like a river. It does not hold back the light of joy; it does not restrain cheerfulness nor cloud the sunny, smiling face. Christ came not to be ministered unto but to minister and when His love reigns in our heart, we will follow His example.

Steps to Christ Bible Study Guide

Thank you God my Father for revealing your love to me beyond a shadow of doubt in the gift of your Son for my redemption. I choose to abide in Jesus that I may experience the fullness of Joy and pleasure that He desires to give to me.

Circle: Yes Undecided

I accept the honor of bearing the name “Christian” and choose to reveal to others the joy, peace, and happiness that comes from abiding in Him.

Circle: Yes Undecided

I choose to trust the Lord because I realize that trusting Him is my only source of protection from Satan’s lies and unbelief.

Circle: Yes Undecided

It is my goal to uplift and encourage those I am around so they will not drift into discouragement and unbelief.

Circle: Yes Undecided

Study Notes - Prayer Requests - Answered Prayers: _____
