

Devotional Thoughts :: The joy of knowing Jesus ~ Extreme Devotion**The joy of knowing Jesus ~ Extreme Devotion, on: 2009/8/15 9:22**

“It is amazing how you can see Jesus in the face of other believers. Their faces shine, and it was quite an achievement for the glory of God to shine on the face of a Christian in Communist jails. We did not wash—I had not washed for three years—but the glory of God shone even from behind the crust of dirt. And they always had triumphant smiles on their faces,” wrote an imprisoned pastor.

“I know of other Christians who were released from Communist prisons, such as I was. Like them, I was stopped several times on the street by passersby asking, ‘Sir, what is it in you? You look like such a happy man. What is the source of your happiness?’ I told them that it came from many years in Communist jails suffering for my Savior.

“They could not understand this because they could not think beyond the difficulties of their own lives. They had not learned to walk in the Spirit and to experience the presence of God. Many would think, ‘If only you knew what a life I have—a husband who batters me, a wife who nags, and children who break my heart.’ There are many material difficulties and tempests in your soul. But what of them? **How are they to compare with the joy of knowing Jesus?**”

What Jesus gives, no one can take away. He gives us joy in the presence of the Holy Spirit within us. And though our circumstances may grow dim and dark, our joy still shines. Even the darkest dirt from three years in a Communist prison cannot disguise Christian joy. We are not necessarily happy for our affliction. We are not glad for our sorrow. Yet we remain joyful because of Christ’s presence within our sorrow. Have you lost your sense of joy? You realize no one can take your joy from you. If it is missing from your life, it is because you willingly gave it up on account of your circumstances. Ask God to restore your joy in him today.