

# MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

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Rejoicing In The Midst Of Troubles

Dear Friend,

Recently, I sat down to read my Bible and as I thought about where to read, I was directed by the Holy Ghost to open to James chapter 1 and start there. I have to admit that I was less than enthusiastic at the thought of reading James, particularly the first chapter. Often it seems that we shy away from areas of the Bible that speak of things we either don't understand or don't want to hear because they challenge our way of thinking. This is definitely the case with James 1:2-3.

***“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; (3) Knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”***

When we read this verse it starts off by telling us to “**count it all joy**”, which in and of itself is easy, no problem. If only we could stop right there and not continue with the next words, “**when you fall into divers temptations**”. In one sentence we have gone from doing something relatively easy to doing something that is very difficult. When I read the first part of the verse I think to myself, “Count it all joy, sure no problem.” Then, I get to the end of the verse and I'm thinking, “**How in the world do I count it all joy when I fall into divers temptations?**” This is where we need to focus our attention in the area of rejoicing in the midst of troubles. How can this be possible?

In case you're wondering, the idea of “divers temptations” is “various sorts of temptings, testings and trials”. If we were talking about various sorts of good things, undoubtedly people would be lining up to get their share of whatever good things were being handed out. But, James is not describing good things. James is telling the church to count it all joy, in other words, “rejoice”, when we are surrounded by all sorts of temptations, testings and trials. No matter how difficult or impossible your situation might be, the only correct response is to rejoice!

That might not sound like the uplifting news you were hoping to hear, but it must be the solution that will yield the best results. How can I say that? Consider who is writing these words by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. We are hearing this from the half-brother of Jesus Himself, telling us to rejoice whenever all of hell is lining up against us. I would imagine James, at some point, witnessed Jesus do this very thing.

Would you rather he had said to rejoice **or** to go find a corner somewhere and hunker down because there's no hope? Picture a coach heading into the locker room at half time and his team is being stopped at every turn. How would you feel to hear the coach say; "Well team there is just no hope of winning this game. All is lost. I just want you to try and stay alive until this whipping is over with." Would you feel inspired to go on, when the coach is convinced it's hopeless? Absolutely not!

No one knows how a game is going to end. Yet we have the advantage of knowing exactly how things are going to end, because Jesus has already secured our victory. Sure there might be some unpleasant times along the way, but in the end we win because we have already won in Jesus. Jesus has already gone to the cross and defeated satan in the belly of the earth. Look at how Paul said it. (Colossians 2:15)

***"And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."***

Notice, it does not say that Jesus will triumph over principalities and powers some day off in the future once we have all gone to be with Him. It does not say Jesus will triumph over the devil when satan is finally cast into the lake of fire. No, **Jesus has already defeated satan**, if only the church would wake up to the fact that satan and all his demons are under our feet because they are under His feet and we are members of His body.

Paul wrote in his letter to the Ephesians about the victory we have in Christ and how it has already been secured for us now, not some time off in the future. (Ephesians 1:19-23)

**"And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, (20) Which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, (21) Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: (22) And hath put all things under His**

**feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church (23) Which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.”**

In case you're wondering about the; **“exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe”**, look at what it is associated with. Paul said it is: **“according to the working of His mighty power...which He wrought, (or worked) in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.”** The same power that the Father used to successfully raise Christ from the dead and set Him at His right hand in heavenly places has also raised us up, that is of course those of us who have made Jesus Christ Lord, and set us at the right hand of the Father in Christ Jesus.

So, with that in mind what you have to ask yourself is this; **“Was there any area whatsoever that Jesus did not totally and completely defeat the enemy? The answer to that is NO! Paul emphatically makes this point in the next verse. (Ephesians 1:21)**

**“Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.”**

Paul wants us to know that the victory Jesus secured for us, which we now enjoy as members of His Body, **positioned us in Christ at the Father's right hand**, far above all the powers of the devil. He didn't just barely win the victory and squeak past the enemy. No, Jesus whipped the devil completely. But, He didn't stop there.

He made a show of the devil openly, in other words Jesus didn't shake hands with the devil and say; **“Good game, you sure gave it your all devil. You should be proud of yourself.”** No, after Jesus crushed satan and his kingdom He, **“made a show of him openly.”** This is referring to the ancient practice in which the winning side took the leader of those whom they defeated and dragged him naked through the streets of his kingdom.

In effect, Jesus dragged satan, naked, through the streets of his kingdom for all of his underlings to see. His kingdom was now in shambles and his demonic hosts were witness to the overthrow and end of satan's reign. But, the problem with the devil is that he refuses to accept defeat. The enemy continues to fight even though he is defeated. His objective now is to convince the unsaved that they are fine just the way they are and have no need for the redemptive work of Jesus. For the believers, satan must convince them that nothing is really different for them after making Jesus Lord of their life.

The enemy uses every trick in the book to convince Christians that they just have to put up with whatever torment he unleashes against them. At times believers accept the lie that it is God putting sickness and disease on them to teach them something. Nothing could be further from the truth. Or, that somehow they deserve to pay the price now for the consequences of their previously sin filled lifestyle, which is absolutely not true. All of the enemy's tricks are designed to lure us into believing and accepting a lie and in so doing we actually defeat ourselves. But, that's all he has in his arsenal.

The truth is that no matter what the devil or his demonic hosts say or do Jesus has defeated them once and for all. That means that for the unsaved person, Jesus has secured their deliverance out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light if only they will accept His Lordship. For the saved person, who has already stepped out of darkness and into light, the challenge now is to see them self as they truly are. **They are seated at the right hand of the Father, in Christ Jesus, with the enemy and his forces under their feet.**

So, how does all this relate back to what James said when he instructed believers to rejoice when they fall into all kinds of temptations, testings and trials? Rejoicing in the midst of trouble is an act of faith on our part because we know who we are and where we are seated; in heavenly places at the right hand of the Father. We rejoice because we know how this is going to end. We are not wondering if somehow satan is going to get the best of Jesus, maybe slip something past Jesus without Him knowing. No, the devil is defeated and he will never be anything but defeated.

The key for us today is to be confident in who we are as children of God and settle it in our hearts that no matter how it looks, no matter what the enemy tries to get us to believe, he is defeated and Jesus is the conqueror. As we see ourselves for who we truly are we will be more confident to rejoice in the good times, as well as, the bad because ultimately we know no matter what the enemy is defeated on our behalf. This will also affect our confidence when it comes to speaking to those unwanted circumstances and commanding them to obey us instead of running to God and begging Him to get the devil off our backs.

So, we can rejoice in the midst of whatever kind of troubles we are faced with because we know who we are and where we are seated.

~ Jesus Loves You!

*Mark Jenkins*