*THE PRACTICE of GODLINESS* by Jerry Bridges

**Chapter Nine– “JOY” – Romans 14:17**

**“The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 14:17NASB)**

*Ladies, have you given much thought to the importance God places on the fruit of joy in your life?*

*Jerry Bridges shares at the beginning of this chapter that, “True Christian joy is both a privilege and a duty. Jesus said, “I have come that they [His sheep] may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). He has come that our lives might be full of joy…He has done all to make it possible for us to live joyful lives.” (pg.’s 105,106)*

Let’s together look at some of the highlights in this chapter:

**The Stumbling Blocks that hinder us from experiencing joy (pg.’s 106-110):**

- Realize that “All sin, be it an attitude or action, MUST BE dealt with…” Psalm 32, Psalm 51

- Realize that “All of our confidence MUST BE in Jesus Christ and not in our flesh” Phil.3:1-11

- Realize that “All of God’s discipline MUST BE welcomed and not resented” Hebrews 12:4-11

- Realize that “All trials MUST BE accepted from God’s hand and not rejected.” Job 42:1-6

Therefore, sin, self-confidence, self-pity, and self-focus all hinder us from experiencing joy.

**The Stepping Stones that help us to experiencing joy (pg.’s 110-115):**

- Remember, WE MUST “confess and repent of our sin” - God is forgiving! 1 John 1:9

- Remember, WE MUST “confidently trust in the character of God” - God is faithful! Rom.8:28

- Remember, WE MUST “come to have an eternal perspective” - God is forever! 2 Cor. 4:16-18

- Remember, WE MUST “cultivate the habit of always being thankful” - God is fulfilling! Ps.16:11

**The Spirit empowered Scriptures that lead us to experiencing joy:**

- Recall David - “Restore to me the **joy** of Your salvation” Psalm 51:12

- Recall Jesus - “for the **joy** set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame…” Heb.12:2

- Recall Paul - “**Rejoice** in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.” Rom. 12:12

- Recall James - “Consider it all **joy** my brethren, when you encounter various trials…” Jam.1:2-4

- Recall Jesus – “…**rejoice** that your names are recorded in heaven” Luke 10:20b

- Recall Peter – “though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you **greatly rejoice** with **joy** inexpressible and full of glory.” 1 Pet.1:3-9

*“Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. It is a result of His work, but it is also both our privilege and our duty to be joyful. We must, by His power, rejoice. This is a part of the practice of godliness.” pg. 117*

*Ladies, I concur with Jerry, “As we look to Christ ‘with eyes faith’, let us remember that the purpose of rejoicing is not so we can feel better emotionally (though that will happen). The purpose of joy is to glorify God by demonstrating to an unbelieving world that our loving and faithful heavenly Father cares for us and provides for us all that we need.” (pg. 112)*

**“Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; And let those who love Your salvation say continually, “Let God be magnified.” (Psalm 70:4NASB)**

Pressing onward and looking upward in our pursuit of holiness and our practice of godliness,

Christyn