

## FULNESS OF JOY.

"These things write we unto you that your joy may be full."  
– 1 John 1:4.

Joy may be regarded as the effervescence or overflow of true and genuine happiness; and it is our Heavenly Father's good pleasure that his children should be so full of happiness as to bubble over all the time. To this end he has prepared a table before them, even in the presence of their enemies, and filled their cup of happiness full, even to running over. (Psa. 23:5.) This table of good things is his precious truth, to which we, who were poor condemned creatures under sentence of death, but sincerely penitent and desiring to return to God, have been graciously invited.

There, most prominently spread out before me, lies a most precious document: it is my *pardon*, sealed with the precious blood of Christ and signed by the great Sovereign of the Universe. It reads, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." And thereto is appended this emphatic assertion, challenging contradiction – "It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth?" (John 3:16; Rom. 8:33,34.) "What?" I exclaim, "Does that mean me?" Yes, says the document, if you are one of the world – one of the condemned posterity of Adam – and willing to accept this free gift of God through Jesus Christ his Son, then this pardon is *yours*. And you need no one else to tell you so. Do you not hear? "*It is God that justifieth.* Who is he that condemneth?"

With tears of gratitude I gladly accept the favor; and, truly, if there were nothing more on the table we might well say, Our cup is full. But no: there is more, much more; and, drying my

tears, I see that side by side with this blessed document lies another which guarantees full restoration, to all the willing and obedient, of all the rights, privileges and blessings originally granted to our father Adam, but which he long ago forfeited, not only for himself, but for all his posterity. It reads, "Times of Refreshing [or renewing] shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ,...whom the heavens must retain till the Times of Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21.) Praise the Lord! I exclaim; that fixes a definite time when the blessings of liberty from sin and death shall begin to be *actually* realized.

O! how we rejoice; and even though we still wear the prison uniform of a diseased and dying body, and still abide within the prison wall of this present dying condition, we rejoice in hope of the glorious day of release.

But while clasping and holding and rejoicing in this precious hope, realizing that I am now recognized as a child of God and that in due time I shall be attired and blessed accordingly, my eye catches sight of a beautiful card. With trembling hand and a vague suspicion that this may be still another message of divine love, I lift it and read, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father's house: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him." – Psa. 45:10,11. **[R1494 : page 28]**

Was ever a proposal of marriage couched in more delicate and beautiful phrase? With astonishment I read it again and again. Surely it can mean nothing less than this: I am invited by the King of kings to become the bride of his royal Son – his only begotten Son and heir of all things. And since clothed with the imputed robe of his righteousness, which hides all the unrighteousness of my own robes, I am really considered beautiful in the eyes of the

King, I am told, so that he desires to make me his bride – if I am willing for his dear sake to forget my own people and my father's [Adam's] house – the world in general, with all its hopes, aims and ambitions.

And while I gladly accept the offer and hasten to make ready for the glorious consummation, I find on this same bounteous table explicit directions as to how I may fit myself to behold the King in his beauty – of how I must appear in this precious robe of his righteousness which now makes me beautiful in his eyes, and that I may work out upon it the "fine needle work" (pains-taking embroidery) of an actual righteousness. Then, too, there are encouragements to perseverance in overcoming the world, to faithfulness in making ready for his appearing [R1495 : page 28] and to watchfulness against any snares by the way. Then there are warnings of the dangers and hardships of the pathway which are permitted to prove my love and loyalty by my faithful endurance. And there are copious promises of grace sufficient for every time of need. And there is line upon line to assure and reassure my faith of my Heavenly Father's good pleasure to thus exalt me to joint-heirship with his Son and to make me meet for such exaltation by making me also a partaker with him of the divine nature. (2 Pet. 1:4.) Then there are precious secrets for those thus elected of God – with reference to the time and manner and circumstances, etc., of the Lord's appearing and to the glory and honor and blessing of the coming inheritance and the blessed mission of the coming kingdom. Ah! surely, Lord, "thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: my cup *runneth over*," and I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Ah, says the inspired Apostle who wrote some of these things, and who saw the Lord and heard his teachings when he was here in the flesh – "These things write we unto you that your joy may be full. That which we have seen and heard declare we

unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us (fellow-heirs of the same promises); and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:4,3.) O what condescension on the part of the divine Father and Son and what favor toward us! We all are one – one family – the divine royal family whence universal blessing shall shortly flow to all creatures in heaven and in earth.

But hold: there may be some who unworthily claim this honor while really they have no part nor lot in the matter. The only conditions upon which we can claim these precious promises are those of faith and obedience. And if we are still trusting in the finished redemptive work of Christ, and obedient to the heavenly calling, we are walking in the light of God's promises and instruction. And since in God is no darkness at all, and he has promised to guide us continually by his spirit through his Word, we cannot walk in darkness while we follow his leading. And in thus following where he leads and hearkening to his voice, and in making known our wants and our gratitude and love in prayer, which he has promised always to hear and heed, we have sweet fellowship with him and with his dear Son, our Lord Jesus. And not only so, but we have sweet fellowship also with all saints who are faithfully traveling in the same way.

"This, then," says the Apostle, "is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." If we have fellowship with him we are walking (progressing) in the light – in the light which divine truth sheds about us and in the light of his approving countenance.

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness [walk contrary to his truth] we lie [for God does not lead his children that way], and do not the truth." Ah, there is the trouble. If any walk in darkness [away from the truth and toward

error] it is not God's fault, but their own, in not obeying the truth.  
Dearly beloved, let us walk in the light.

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