

## Philippians 4:12-13

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me the strength.

We are living in times unheard of in our living memory. In many respects surreal until you see the empty shelves, people are frightened. Not to underestimate the threat we face but there a bigger threat, one that says, I can't be happy right now. This current situation does not allow me to be happy. I can only be happy when things get back to normal.

Notice what Paul said in Philippians 4 verse 8...

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

It sounds like Paul was saying that happiness was a choice, not an emotion.

Don't you know Paul, of all people, could have said, "I've had way too many problems to be happy"

Listen to what Paul lists as his daily battles:

q I've had to work hard

q I've been in prison often

q On five different occasions I received 39 lashes

q There were three times I was beaten with rods

q Once I was stoned

q 3 times I was shipwrecked

q I've had rivers and robbers and relatives who tried to hurt me

q I've gone without sleep so many times I've lost count

q There have been times that I shivered all night because I had no clothes and no food.

Yet Paul seems to say, "Happiness is a choice; not an emotion or a destination".

Paul said I have learned to be content (happy) no matter what my situation.

The Psalmist said, "This is the day the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it"

Notice he didn't say, "tomorrow I will be happy" He didn't say, "next week when I don't have so many problems, I'm going to rejoice" No, he said, THIS is the day. Today is the day God wants you to be happy! If we are always waiting for an even to make us happy, we are going to spend our whole lifetime waiting. Something will always be "not quite right" in your life. You will always find some reason not to be happy.

If we don't appreciate each and every day and learn to rejoice in it, we will never learn to be happy. We will be with this devastating Disease for the foreseeable future, but God wants us to know that we can rejoice each and every day because there are three things that no person and no problem can ever take away from us.

# 1 – the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives

# 2 – Our close relationship with Jesus, and

# 3 – The hope of our eternity spent with Him!

Heavenly Father in these uncertain and fearful times we can still praise you for the certainty of your love and care shown to us through your Son our Lord Jesus. In this Spring time help us to be happy with your love, the love of our family and friends. Help us to see we can reach out to each other through prayer,

through a phone call through social media and be there for each other. We pray for all those who are ill at this time, in the frailty of our humanity help us to find your strength and healing. For all the care of the doctors and nurses, for all the medical profession we thank you for their dedication and care, we ask that you would keep them and their families safe. Help us to care for them. Lord may we be there for each other.

For we ask all this in Jesus name. Amen