

Spirit-Filled Pastor: Are You Too Serious for God?

One morning, as I stood in the kitchen preparing my favorite drink, iced tea, my lovely wife Marsha walked in and saw the seriousness across my face.

She gently asked, "What's wrong?" My typical male response was "Nothing."

"What are you thinking about?" She asked again. "Nothing," I repeated.

Marsha then commented about my solemnity, and said, "I don't see you smiling much lately. The man I fell in love with, the man I married, loved to laugh." Then she asked a question that was beyond hiding my facial expressions and moved beyond my mental thought process, "Honey, have you lost your joy?"

That was a question that sat in my heart for the next several days and weeks. When the word "joy" comes to mind, in my humanness, I often think about people in the world who drink too much, who are kind of spacey or deny reality. In my spirit, I know joy comes from something more profound.

Where had my joy gone?

Where has your joy gone?

Are you aware of the serious time in which we live?

Have you seen the news? I hope you caught the question; I'm a little sarcastic.

We live in a serious time of a pandemic, elections, Supreme Court appointees, the future of our country, fires consuming the West, unemployment, riots, protesters, people dying in our streets, abortion, churches in court fighting for the right to

open and the list goes on.

I dare bring up the subject, a three-letter word “joy.”

joy is not about what’s happening outside of you, but what is happening inside of you.

The word “joy” is mention 300 times in the Bible. Our world is lost. The planet we live on is groaning for the return of its creator to break the curse. Yet, we are still called to live out joy.

Keep in mind the words of David’s song when he was messed up. Psalm 51:1-2 (NIV) says, “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.” Let us repent of our fear that masquerades as seriousness and choose the joy of the Lord!

Yes, we are serious leaders who speak the Word of God in power. But joy is the Holy Spirit element that awakens people that we have been in God’s presence. “In His presence is fullness of joy.”

The pump on the well of salvation is “joy.”

Remember, some of the most challenging words ever written in God’s Word when facing trials, “count it all joy” (James 1:2). These are four words I don’t like but need to hear.

–Good days: joy.

–Bad days: joy.

–Up day: joy.

–Down days: joy.

–Win: joy.

–Lose: joy.

Say to yourself, “Jesus, you’re the center of my joy. All that’s good and perfect come from you”. Every day ask God to release His joy no matter what the challenge before us is.

Today, I choose joy, and I hope you do too.

You are beautiful; I see Jesus in you.

Have an awesome week! {eoa}

Mikel French has challenged spiritual awakening all across America, where many celebrations extended into multiple weeks, and has conducted celebrations in France, Sweden, Russia, Romania, Poland, Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia, Germany, South Africa, Malawi, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Haiti, Japan, Singapore, India and Thailand. He conducted an outreach celebration in Manila, Philippines, reaching 200,000 teenagers with the Book of Hope. Through the generous support of partners, he has presented the message of Jesus Christ to millions of people in the nation of Russia through televised citywide soul-winning celebrations. Mikel considers it an honor to assist in conducting the annual pastor’s conference, where thousands of pastors from Russia’s 11 time zones come for training, teaching and equipping. Mikel and his wife, Marsha, reside in Tulsa, Oklahoma.