

Why Many Christians Never Experience the Peace They Desperately Crave

People look for happiness in a lot of places. Many chase after a bigger house, a nicer car or a better paying job, while others seek education, marriage or other achievements with great passion.

While it's certainly not wrong to desire these things, there is only one thing in life that can give us true peace, joy and fulfillment—God.

Matthew 6:33 is truly a scripture to live by. Jesus says, “But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides” (AMPC).

Seeking the kingdom includes seeking God Himself and craving an intimate relationship with Him. It's about wanting to know Him and not just what He can do for you. There is quite a difference between seeking possessions and seeking God.

I can still remember a time years ago when I had a lot of the “things” I wanted, but I still wasn't a very happy person. Sound familiar? The truth is, no matter what you have, if you don't have the peace, joy and fulfillment that only God can give, then you really don't have anything at all!

Romans 14:17 (NKJV) sums this up perfectly. It says, “The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

True satisfaction doesn't come from the outside—from all of the things we can do or buy—but it comes from within. God

wants us to live with His righteousness, peace and joy. They are Kingdom benefits, and they are part of our inheritance as God's children.

The 'Right' Way to Live

So many people—and even many Christians—walk around feeling vaguely guilty most of the time. They feel like they've made too many mistakes and can never quite measure up. But that's not God's will for us!

Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (NIV).

As we begin to truly understand our righteousness "in Christ," we will no longer wallow in condemnation or feel like we have to earn God's forgiveness. Instead, we can live with the confidence and security that God knows us better than anyone ... and He loves and approves of us.

Supernatural Peace

I once heard a very famous actor being interviewed about his life and career.

I'll never forget one of the final questions. He was asked, "Is there anything in life you haven't achieved, something you still want?" He simply answered, "Inner peace."

You see, true peace only comes through a relationship with Jesus Christ. God offers us His peace that "transcends all understanding" (see Phil. 4:7). It doesn't come from our circumstances, and it's not something we can buy.

God's peace is vital to us because life is unpredictable. When the storms of life begin to swirl around us, there is only one person who can give us peace in the midst of the storm.

Jesus is the "Prince of Peace," and as you spend time with Him

in prayer and through His Word, you will sense His supernatural peace that transcends all understanding.

Joy for the Journey

John 10:10 says, “The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)” (AMPC).

God wants us to enjoy our lives. That used to be a big problem for me because of the sexual, physical and emotional abuse I endured growing up. As a result, I never really got to be a kid, and I never truly understood what it meant to enjoy my life.

However, joy is part of God’s kingdom package (see Ps. 16:11). Like His peace, we can receive and live with God’s joy in every circumstance, regardless of what is going on around us.

The dictionary partially defines joy as “a calm delight” and “extreme merriment.” I particularly like “a calm delight” because even when we’re not doing something we consider exciting, we can still have the joy of the Lord deep inside of our soul.

We often look forward to the weekend or the next fun event in life, but God wants us to experience His joy and satisfaction every single day. In fact, Nehemiah 8:10 says, “...The joy of the Lord is your strength” (NIV). Through the ups and downs of everyday life, God wants to strengthen us for the journey and experience His delight in everything we do.

God isn’t against us having “things”—He delights in being good to His children! But He doesn’t want those things to have control of us. I encourage you to put God first in your life. Develop a relationship with Him and ask for His guidance and direction. Because there is a way to truly enjoy your life, and it’s all found “in Him.” {eoa}