



The Supernatural Force of Love

BECKY COMBEE

I had a very difficult day recently. Honestly, it was my worst day in a long, long time. My soul – the mind, will, and emotions – was inundated with despondency and despair, and if that wasn't enough, resentment and bitterness followed close behind. I was almost overwhelmed, yet I knew I must surrender every painful moment to God's command of love.

God's love is one of the most powerful forces in our world.

God's love is the supernatural force poured into the heart of every Christian.¹ In order for this love to reign and rule, we must choose to follow God closely. We must crucify our flesh and renew our minds² so that God's Word can dominate every circumstance. As we surrender to His Word, every harsh word and unfair judgment falls at our feet. The chains of oppression are laid aside and the power of God's love brings unspeakable joy.

That sounds easy, doesn't it? Yet often, the battle between the spirit and the soul is fierce. While our spirit seeks the ways of God, the soul

defends its selfish desires. Driven by a storm of emotions, it chooses to retaliate. Can we win this battle? Yes! The power of love is greater than any force of evil that would malign our godly character. God's love rules when our soul cries out that life is unfair.

My first resource in challenging times is to go boldly to God's throne and ask for help.³ At His throne, I ask, and I receive! I seek and I find! I knock and the door is opened!⁴ Here, I receive godly direction and revelation. Stirred by divine counsel and empowered by His presence, I leave

The Joy To Come

SUZANNE D. WILLIAMS

*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; **who for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb 12:2)*

Life has been difficult for the last couple of years, and sometimes, I find myself wallowing in a lot of regret. Why can't my life be like it was five years ago or ten or twenty? I read a comment on a social network that really helped me in this area. The writer said to stop trying to reclaim the joy of

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this place of refuge with confidence. I am not dependent on my own knowledge or ability anymore. God has spoken, and the Spirit of God is with me. I do not face this predicament alone.

In the days which follow, I remind myself continually of God's Word. Usually, I walk around my kitchen island, quoting the Scripture and praying with great gratitude. It is somewhat of a family joke, yet partially true, that I have walked miles and miles around that island. Although my emotions may contradict the Word of God now and then, my heart joins with God's life-giving Spirit, and I am assured of victory.

God's love is one of the most powerful forces in our world. The Scripture declares God SO LOVED the world that He GAVE His only begotten Son!⁵ It

says because of His GREAT LOVE⁶ we are redeemed from death and hell. When we declare Him as our Lord, the overwhelming power of His love becomes a part of our lives.

With this great love, we love one another. We love our neighbor, love our brother, and love our ENEMY. No one and no circumstance is beyond the grasp of God's love. No matter what comes against us, God's love is ongoing, continual, and daily. It refuses to bow to ungodly words or deeds. IT IS GOD GIVEN, and **I choose to let it rule my life.**

As we surrender to God's Word, the Holy Spirit will enable God's love to pour into the lives around us. "God's love in us will make a difference. How marvelous!"

¹Rm 5:5 ²Rm 12:1-2 ³Heb 4:16 ⁴Mt 7:7 ⁵Jn 3:16 ⁶Eph 2:4 ⁷Num 11:5 ⁸Jer 29:11

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the past, it's not possible anyway, and instead, look forward to the joys to come.

Now, there's nothing wrong with memories. I think about my childhood, seeing my grandparents especially, and having that young responsibility-free mindset uplifts me for a time, but there comes a point when I'm no longer happy remembering. I'm miserable, thinking about how all that is gone and never coming back.

The Israelites did this same thing. God had delivered them from Egypt with many signs and wonders. He'd provided great wealth for them from among the Egyptian people. He'd parted the Red Sea and drowned the entire pursuing army. Daily, He left manna, bread from heaven, on the ground for their sustenance. Yet they mourned the garlic and onions they'd eaten in captivity when in front of them was the Promised Land.⁷

Hope is a forward view. I must always have my gaze, not on the circumstances or my personal slip-ups, nor even on the great things from years ago, but on the magnificent plan of God still waiting for me.⁸ An author stated it this way. The truth is not that the glass is half-full or half-empty. Those are our perspectives of the truth. The truth is there

is a glass of water. But what part do you see? The choice to see things half-full is mine to make.

Then after I've made that choice, I **don't have to be all things to all people.** Learning this helped my joy immensely. God has people capable of doing what I can't.

Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? (1Co 12:29-30)

Each of us is unique. I am a writer. My cousin is an artist. My mom is a Bible teacher. We have different callings in the church and different ways of doing things at home or our job. Daily, I can stand in my particular gifts and let God take care of everything else. I can pray. I can give. I can build others up with the written word. I can be me, and there is my joy.

After all, Jesus came to take the weight of a sinful world in my place. He faced the cross, so I didn't have to. I now choose to roll my cares onto His very capable shoulders. I trust Him to guide my footsteps and look ahead with joy, in faith expecting good things.