

HEALING JOY Becky Combee

I WOKE UP one morning long ago in despair. For no reason in particular, at least no reason that I could remember, my heart was very heavy. It somewhat baffled me because that is contrary to my usual demeanor. Mad I understand! Aggravated I do well! But, not sad. How did that happen? I never did figure it out.

I decided to apply the Scripture to my dilemma, and that's always a good idea. I was going to walk around my kitchen island and praise the Lord. And I tried! But I just couldn't do it. So I did another thing that is contrary to my nature. I sat down and cried.

Jesus set captives free and brought great joy.

I don't know about you, but I almost never cry. I have jokingly said that I cry once every ten years. I've never calculated these rare moments, but I suspect that calculation is close to the truth. I just never found that it helped me!

In Isaiah 61:1-3 the prophet Isaiah unfolded the ministry of our Lord with the most encouraging news. By the Spirit he wrote that our Lord would give the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Isaiah also said Jesus would bind up the brokenhearted and

THE WEAK PLACE Suzanne D. Williams

THE MIND is not the enemy. It is the attack point, the weak place where the enemy seeks to break through in order to steal, kill, and destroy. And he is relentless. He will not stop searching for a way inside, to do damage.

Wrong ideas, wrong beliefs, wrong opinions, leave us vulnerable to his deception. If he can cause us to accept what is not true, to see untruth as true, then we give a foothold to fear, anxiety, depression, anger, and other deadly thought patterns. Next thing we know, we are blaming God for how we feel instead of rolling the care of it over onto the One who died for us.

John 10 compares us to sheep in God's pasture where Jesus is the door and the only way in and out. The thief climbs in some other way; he goes over the fence, where it is broken, seeking to to destroy.

Renew the mind and you strengthen the fence. You eliminate the weak spot.

How do you do that? How do you change your thinking? You put the Words of Almighty God first place. What is in your heart is what you will speak. When you are squeezed by difficult people and tough circumstances, what comes out? Do you have compassion? Do you pray for them? Or do you complain and criticize? Are you panicked? Suicidal? Then you have a weak place that needs rebuilding.

The first step toward becoming strong is to

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proclaim liberty to the captives. When Jesus taught in His hometown of Nazareth, He quoted this great promise.¹

Jesus set captives free and brought great joy as he walked the face of our earth. Mourning, heaviness and broken hearts were eliminated when men, women and children were freed from the trauma of sin and disease. When Jesus said to the man sick of palsy, *"Thy sins be forgiven thee"* and *"Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house"* people marveled and God was glorified.² What a wonderful Savior!

Surely, the joy from Jesus' ministry was overwhelming. Imagine the glorious response of the centurion when Jesus healed his beloved servant.³ Visualize the relief on the face of the nobleman when his servants brought word that his son was alive.⁴ Contemplate the overwhelming excitement of Mary and Martha when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.⁵ Follow the two blind men as they stumbled down the road crying, *"Have mercy on us, O Lord."* Can you see them running at full speed, eyes open and vision clear?⁶ I can! Many days of misery, sadness and serious grief were finished because JESUS CAME! He came to a desperate father and his demonized son.⁷ He came to a woman who had been sick for 18 years. Image her happiness when Jesus said, *"Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity."*⁸ He also came to the pool of Bethesda healing a man after 38 years of illness.⁹ What a joyous moment!

There were so many – so many – healed by the power of the Holy Spirit that rested on Jesus. In Acts 10:38 we read, *"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."* Our great and mighty God has not changed.¹⁰ Jesus is the same today as He was yesterday.¹¹ The Holy Spirit is still here, empowered to heal the sick. Everyone can believe this and receive healing power!

Today is your day of salvation. Now is the time to be free of disease! Rejoice and be glad because the Healer is here!

 1 Lk 4:18 2 Mt 9:1-8 3 Mt 8:5-13 4 Jn 4:46-54 5 Jn 11:1-46 6 Mt 20:30-34 7 Mk 9:17-29 8 Lk 13:11-17 9 Jn 5:1-16 10 Mal 3:6 11 Heb 13:8

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(Continued from "The Weak Place")

know the Word. It must become irreplaceable and unchangeable. It must become the final truth. Second, recognize you have a weak place. Know that your thinking is wrong, even if you aren't sure yet of why or what is correct. Third, seek God's face. Seek His wisdom. The Spirit of God will bring you the revelation you need. He delights to do it. The Author of the Book cannot wait to explain it to you.

Lastly, spend time in worship. In the presence of God is healing. Lift up His name and His goodness. Remind yourself of who He is – Savior, Redeemer, Deliverer, Abundant Life. Because this life of faith is one of intimate relationship. The whole purpose of Jesus becoming the door was to connect us to the Father. The Father cannot wait to speak to you and shower you with great peace and joy. He longs to fill you with His Spirit, and His Holy Spirit only has your good at heart. He will never destroy hope or bring confusion. He will never create a weak place for the enemy to enter.

Jesus will never tear down the fence. He will never say or do anything that scatters the sheep. He came to rescue those at the mercy of the enemy because of a weak place. He came to mend the fence and make us as strong as He is. He endured mental anguish, scorn and mocking and derision, He shouldered the enemies lies, so that we could be strong.

We choose how to think. We choose peace. We choose joy. We choose forgiveness. We decide to alter our point of view to God's point of view and, in so doing, find restoration of our soul. A healthy mind is a God-focused one, and a Godfocused mind turns the tables on the enemy. What he has tried to destroy now becomes a weapon and the Word of God in your heart a death-defying sword.