

7. Peace and Joy in Hard Times.

Can you really have peace and joy during those heart-breaking difficult times?

Let's look at some scripture:

John 16:33 (Jesus said) "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Philippians 4:4-8 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You.

God does not say that if we follow and serve Him, we will not have trouble. He actually says we WILL have trouble, but in the midst of that trouble we find peace and joy in Him.

Yes, it does give us peace to know that we are not alone, and God is on our side, but the peace and joy goes further than that. In my experience, it was in my hardest moments that I received my greatest victories and testimonies. We tend to reach out to Jesus more during those hard times, which in return allows Him to move more in our lives and hearts.

It's during those extremely difficult times that we can sense the Lord sitting right next to us and/or weeping with us. Jesus actually comes into the situation and goes through it with us, giving us peace and joy in Him.

The Lord can also use symbols in a very personal way. Someone once told me that squirrels were a symbol of the Lord being with her. During her hardest times, squirrels would stop at the side of the road and stand up on two feet and watch her drive by (something that rarely happens), and she would be filled with peace and joy.

During my most difficult time, I had a very realistic dream of being in a tiny shack in the middle of a corn field, with a large window that had no glass. A crow came and landed on the windowsill and started squawking. I was so happy to see the crow and started talking to it. I was filled with nothing but pure joy and peace. That feeling of pure joy and peace lingered for a minute or so after I woke up. I have not experienced that kind of peace or joy before or ever since. I truly needed that at that time, and it got me through it. Now when I see crows or ravens, I am reminded of that wonderful feeling of pure peace and joy.

The beautiful thing about peace and joy from the Lord, is how He personalizes it. It's just for you and your spirit. It does surpass all understanding. Even we ourselves don't understand how we are feeling joy and peace in this troubling world. It's a spiritual thing, not of this world, and very mysterious.

If you do not feel His peace or joy, be assured it is for you too. It will come. The more we reach out to Jesus, the more peace and joy will come in. And it is beautiful.