



So, you want peace and joy?

Prepare Him room!

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:7).

Who couldn't do with some peace and joy? Imagine if your life was characterised by peace and joy – if that was your daily experience?

The angels announced joy and peace on earth to herald Jesus' birth.

“Do not be afraid! For behold, I bring you good news of **great joy** that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Saviour has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord! And this will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there appeared with the angel a great multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying:

“Glory to God in the highest,
and **on earth peace to men**
on whom His favour rests!” (Luke 2:10b -14).

And yet, the world churns with unrest, even war. Relationships fracture. Peace and joy seem an elusive construct – out of reach -- thus the high rate of alcohol and drug abuse even in rich countries (Isn't education, science, technology, and wealth supposed to solve all our problems?).

So, if the Kingdom of God brings peace and joy, where is it? Where is this, Kingdom?

Well, here are some thoughts which I hope will help you to understand some profound, yet simple truths that will bring you lasting peace and joy.

The Kingdom of God is where the KING of KINGS reigns.

Now, Jesus does reign over all Creation, all kingdoms. Nothing is above Him. Nothing is out of His sovereign reign. But in this age, the world is corrupted by man's sinfulness. Man has his so-called Kingdoms (realms of 'self' rule in a rebellious state), and Satan, as the Bible says has limited reign on earth (Eph 2:2). *Thus, the ongoing mess!!* But something profound and astonishing has happened.

THE King has come! And one Day His reign will be fully manifest and seen. But for now, He comes as King of hearts. Amazingly, when people surrender to the King, they are changed – and this impacts the world deeply. Peace and Joy have a chance!

I want to say that when you truly allow Jesus to reign in your heart - that means – he is boss – and you submit your thinking, your ways, your behaviour to Him, then you will experience His peace. We can't manufacture that ourselves. That's why it says: **For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness.**

You know, everyone likes to be righteous. Think of all the 'righteous' causes floating around at the moment. Everyone likes to be right. They really do. But, whilst causes can be good, there is a righteousness that we desperately need, and without which we will never have life that truly is life. It is

the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor 5:21). Our own righteousness does not save us nor bring us life. God's righteousness brings peace and joy. His Kingdom is characterised by that, and our lives will be too when we allow the King to rule our hearts.

His righteousness is His way of being and doing right. But it is more than us obeying his rules and ways. **It is about receiving HIM!**

O behold, the mystery now unfolds

See the star shine on the virgin foretold

Angels sing and light up the sky

Hope rings out in a newborn's cry

Swing wide, you ancient gates (symbolic of Jerusalem and God's people)

For Christ is born today!

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Let the King of glory enter in (Rebecca Elliott, Dave Fournier. © 2014 Sovereign Grace Praise)

And friends this is about a relationship with God involving daily fellowship with him. It is a surrendered walk with him through life. And it is about growing in Christlikeness.

When he is rightfully King of our lives, not just theoretically, but practically - in our daily walk with Him, then joy and peace will be our experience in abundance. And not just for now, but forever!

Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign!

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