***THE JOY OF KNOWING GOD: 6 MEDITATIONS IN PHILIPPIANS***

**MEDITATION 1: THE JOY OF TRANSFORMATION**

**WHAT IS JOY?**

**WORLD’S VIEW:** \*the passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good; pleasurable feelings caused by success, good fortune, the gratification of desire \* Merriam Webster 1828

**JOY IS THE ORIENTATION OF MY HEART, THAT IS,**

**A CONTINUOUS GAZE OF MY SOUL UPON A SAVING GOD.**

**THE SOURCE AND THE OBJECT OF OUR JOY: THE SELF-EXISTENT GOD (PSALM 90:1 – 2 NKJV)**

*Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.**Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever You had formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.*

*What do I mean by reality…that which has existence apart from any idea any mind may have of it, and which would exist if there were no mind anywhere to entertain a thought of it. That which is real has being in itself. It does not depend upon the observer for its validity.*

*A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God*

**THE EXPRESSION OF JOY (3 examples)**

**THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH: NEHEMIAH 8:5 – 6; 9 – 10 ESV**

*And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. . .**And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law. Then he said to them, “Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”*

**THE JOY OF MY SALVATION: PSALM 51:7 – 13 NKJV**

*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice.
Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.*

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.*

*Restore* (renew, repair, to turn back) *to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You.*

**THE JOY OF FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER: 1 JOHN 1:1 – 4 NKJV**

*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.*

**MEDITATION 1: THE JOY OF TRANSFORMATION**

**PHILIPPIANS 1:3 – 11 ESV**

*I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,**always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now****. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*** *It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

**PHILIPPIANS 1:3 – 11 NKJV**

*I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,* *always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,* ***being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ****; just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.* *And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,* *that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

**HE WHO HAS BEGUN A GOOD WORK IN YOU**

**TITUS 3:4 – 7 ESV** *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,* *whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

**WHO I WAS**

**1 CORINTHIANS 6:9 – 11 NKJV**

*Or do you not know that the unrighteouswill not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.* ***And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.***

**COLOSSIANS 3:5 – 10 NKJV**

*Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming.* ***In these you too once walked, when you were living in them.*** *But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have* ***put off the old selfwith its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed*** (to make new, to restore, to go back to the beginning) ***in knowledge after the image of its creator.***

**WHO I AM BECOMING**

**EPHESIANS 2:10 NKJV**

*For we are* ***his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus*** *for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

**EPHESIANS 4:20 – 24 ESV**

*But that is not the way you learned Christ!—**assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and* ***to be renewed in the spirit of your minds****,* *and* ***to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.***

**WILL COMPLETE IT UNTIL THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST**

***1 PETER 1:13 – 19 ESV***

*Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* ***As obedient children* (children of obedience)*,*** *do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy,* ***you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written,******“You shall be holy, for I am holy.”*** *And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*

**2 PETER 1:3 – 11**

***His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness****, through the knowledge of him who called us tohis own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them* ***you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire****. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualitiesare yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

**PHILIPPIANS 1:9 – 11**

*And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment,* ***so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.***

**DISCIPLESHIP GROUP TIME:**

**INTRODUCE YOURSELF** and **SHARE** something from either the introduction or the 1st meditation that caught your attention.

As believers, we know from the Scriptures that God is conforming us to the image of Christ (that we would look less and less like ourselves and more like Jesus). **As a testimony to God’s work in you** – **SHARE** something that He is changing in your attitudes, perspective, conduct or heart.

**HOMEWORK: READ through PHILIPPIANS at least twice this week. Choose 2 or 3 of the passages above on which to meditate. Take time to thank God for how He is transforming you – from who you were. . . *to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.***