



Trivial and True Rejoicing

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Trivial types of joy most often encompass perishable, worldly affairs and pleasures.

Trivial joy is like King Solomon's joy with what he toiled for under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:3) and Jonah the Prophet's joy with the plant more than the salvation of Nineveh. The same type of joy is that of the elder son, when he said to his father: "You never gave me a young goat that I might make merry with my friends." (Luke 15:29)

Another type of trivial joy is the joy of some people over their talents. The disciples were joyful in casting out evil spirits, so the Lord told them, "Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subjects to you, but rejoice rather because your names are written in Heaven." (Luke 10:20)

The worst kind of trivial joy is being joyful over other's suffering. Regarding this the Apostle said: "Love does not rejoice in iniquity" (I Corinthians 13:6) as those who rejoice when the enemy falls." (Proverbs 24:17) This wicked joy is commonly referred to as gloating.

The holy and true joyfulness is derived from the fruits of the spirit. (Galatians 5:23) The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord and the Magi when they saw the star and the righteous rejoiced over the fruits of their holy toil, "Those who sow in tears reap in joy." (Psalm 126:5)

The Holy Bible has explained to us the joy of the shepherds when the angel said to them: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy...for there is born to you this day in the City of David a Savior." And the Father said, "It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again." (Luke 15:32)

The joy of repentance of a sinner is in Heaven and on earth! When the Good Shepherd found the lost sheep, "He lays it on his shoulders rejoicing." (Luke 15:5) He also says: "There will be more joy in Heaven over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:7) The widow also rejoiced when she found her lost coin and called all her neighbors to rejoice with her.

We also rejoice over all means of grace.

"I rejoiced over testimonies," "I was glad when they said to me 'Let us go to the House of the Lord'" (Psalm 122:1), "There is a river whose streams shall make glad the City of God." (Psalm 46:4) The righteous rejoice over temptations and reproach (James 1); "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials" so that I rejoice over tribulations.

Finally, the greatest joy is that of the Kingdom: "Enter into the joy of your Lord." (Matthew 25:21) This is the ultimate joy, where we rejoice in the Lord and in His company. Although we have not reached His Kingdom yet, we rejoice while waiting in hope. As the Apostle says, "Rejoice in hope." (Romans 12:12) ❀