

"LET US SING...FOR JOY...TO THE LORD"

{Psalms 95 and 96}

Trinity Presbyterian Church

April 6, 2008

The Apostle Paul listed "JOY" as second only to "LOVE" when describing the of the "Fruit of the Spirit" in the Book of Galatians. The evidence that one is a believer is shown by the genuineness of their unconditional love for others...*and* their joyful spirit.

In Philippians Paul says that he "*always prays with joy*" because of the bond he had with those dear Christian sisters and brothers. A few verses later he mentions the overflowing joy these people had for the Lord!

When was the last time you encountered a person who was overflowing with joy?

As children, we used to sing that chorus—

"I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy, down in my heart!

Down in my heart! Down in my heart!

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy, down in my heart!

Down in my heart to stay!"

We'd clap our hands and sing the song with such exuberance—and even added a few extra verses like...

"I've got the peace that passes understanding down in the depths of my heart..."

"I've got the wonderful love of my blessed redeemer way down in the depths of my soul..."

"JOY" comes from deep within an individual who has experienced the incredible love of Jesus Christ deep within their life. It means far more than happiness based on outward circumstances...it speaks of serenity in the midst of a storm.

A week ago Friday Irma and I went to the California Theater to hear to hear Ludwig van Beethoven's 9th {Choral} Symphony. Frequently referred to as Beethoven's "Ode [or Symphony] to Joy." It was a magnificent

performance by the Silicon Valley Symphony, Chorale, and soloists.

Beethoven's masterpiece has four movements...but, it's that fourth and final movement that represents the synthesis of the whole symphony. The chorus and soloists who have sat patiently through the first three movements now stand and prepare to sing those magnificent lyrics written by Frederick von Schiller. The baritone sets the tone when he sings...

"Oh friend, not these tones!

Let us raise our voices in more pleasing and more joyful sounds"

He is then joined by the quartet and chorus singing the tune with which we're all familiar—and they proceed to sing the marvelous "Ode to Joy!"

One cannot hear this masterpiece without being uplifted.

The Psalmist writes about worshiping God joyfully...

"Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before Him with thanksgiving and extol Him with music and song!"

"Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise His name...for great is the Lord and most worthy of our praise...{and}...let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it; let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy; they will sing before the Lord...!"

Join me as we stand now and sing joyfully the hymn adapted from Beethoven's 9th, with words by Henry van Dyke...

"Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love...!"

