

Psalms 119:11-16 (NIV84)

- 11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.
- 12 Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees.
- 13 With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.
- 14 I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.
- 15 I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.
- 16 I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

We've seen a lot of trouble in recent days. To many of us, it has hit pretty close to home. King David was, to borrow a phrase, "a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering" (Isaiah 53:3). Not only did David witness trouble, trouble oftentimes sought him out and found him. If you read through the psalms written by David you will find a variety of moods and situations that David found himself in. But the more you read, the clearer it becomes that David's help was "in the name of the LORD" (Psalm 124:8).

In these sorrowful and troubling times, take time to read the Psalms and find in them food and refreshment for your weary soul.

Comforted with you in Christ,  
Pastor Golm

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September 2

The Joy of the Gospel

Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart. Jeremiah 15:16

From the above passage we see that the Word of God is meant to be a source of "joy and rejoicing" to the heart of the believer. While this is most certainly true, we must be careful not to oversimplify this profound truth.

It will not do simply to tell our non-church-going friend to read the Bible, assuming that he will find "joy and rejoicing" in his reading. Many Bibles contain more than 1,000 pages, a large portion of which makes most depressing reading.

Over the years, this writer, in his radio and television ministry, has received hundreds of letters from sincere seekers after truth who say: "I've tried to read the Bible, but I get nothing out of it." How, then, is it that the believer can find "joy and rejoicing" in the message of the Holy Scriptures?

Primarily, because he has learned to put God's word of judgment and God's word of grace in proper perspective. It is in God's revelation, recorded in the pages of Holy Writ, that he has

found not only pardon for his sins, but also peace and love and joy as the permanent tenants of his soul.

How do we read our Bible? Do we find in it "joy and rejoicing for our hearts"? We will, if we relate all that we read to the central message of God's Word to us-the revelation of his tender mercy unveiled before our believing eyes in the life, death, and resurrection of his Son, on our behalf.

But joy in our heart should never be an end in itself. It should rather be the source of joy in our lives-a joy that becomes visible in the kind of life we lead. With Luther we must say: "My heart for very joy doth leap; my lips no more can silence keep." The joy of the Gospel, which we have found in "the Word", must spill over into a life of Christian love and action.

Lord, may I always show the joy of my heart in the joy of my life. And may my inner joy enable me to bear winsome witness to those who do not yet believe in You. Amen.