

Happy Valentine Day this Week,

It truly does not seem like Valentine Day and Good Friday are just literally around the corner. Some of our readers will be fasting and eating carefully as we approach the time when we particularly remember the resurrection of our Savior. Just remember, my friends, each time we partake of the Lord's Supper we are also remembering His death and resurrection on OUR behalf. I am so grateful for His sacrifice.

Last Sunday our pastor shared his thoughts about I Thessalonians 1. While referring to verses 2-6, in chapter one, it was great to be reminded to give 'thanks' continually for the blessings God sends our way. Paul gave thanks for the Thessalonian Christians. As He worked with these Followers of the Way, they in turn, brought JOY to his heart.

I was prompted to jot down a few events and thoughts that bring JOY to my heart and life. (Yes, yes, I know, I was jotting while Brooks was preaching, but at least I was thinking. The first joy that morning were thoughts about the book I had just finished writing and had received some of the first copies. Even the title reflected the theme of Paul - JOY. 'More Ransom Notes: Walk With JOY" was just off the press. Writing the simple essays brought JOY, and then seeing the cover with JOY featured also brought a little twinkle and tear.

That Sunday morning I saw a smiling face that had been absent for several weeks, and as I gave him a hug, my heart leaped with JOY. It was so good to visit briefly and share moments of prayer.

Having breakfast weekly with friends, helps bring a smile of JOY to my face, as we visit and I shovel down some eggs and toast into my tummy. Chatting with friends, whether at a weekly breakfast gathering or a quick pause as you push your cart through the grocery store is such a JOYFUL few moments. I can't help but even smile as I write this note.

Of course, I could not omit from my JOYFUL list the thought at even at my more feeble age, hitting the little white missile around the giant green lawn entitled "Golf Course" brings me much JOY. (Yes, Yes. I do not play par golf by a long shot, but I love being with friends and pretending I am hitting the green swiftly, followed by the welcomed 'hole in one.'

That Sunday, as our youth pastor challenged our senior class to a 'Kool-Aid' challenge, my smile was broad. Yes, the 'white haired ones' were to bring five-hundred packets of Kool-Aid before the 'wee-ones' could come up with half-a-thousand packets. I think we may have nudged the youth out a bit, but it does not make any difference. The campers at Lake Springfield Christian Assembly, the Christian camp in the Springfield area, will have a tasty beverage option this summer because of our JOYFUL sharing.

Hopefully each of you can take a few moments and dot down some JOYFUL thoughts. Praise the Lord and give Him thanks. Try to include at least two JOYFUL experiences that relate to Kingdom work. God bless.

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