

P408

Grace Notes Radio Program

PGM 04: POWER

SET 08: Power Tools- Prayer, praise, HIS presence

INTRO: In Psalm 73, the Psalmist frets over the prosperity of the wicked. They seem to be living a carefree life...while the righteous are continually plagued and punished. When he tries to understand it, it's too oppressive for him..UNTIL he enters the sanctuary of God – then he sees things differently. Today on Grace Notes, Barbara Sandbek talks about some of the benefits we receive in the presence of the Lord - so stay tuned.

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The Psalmist almost lost his faith for a minute. Haven't we all been there? In the presence of the Lord, though, he gained UNDERSTANDING. Here he traded his earthly eyes for spiritual ones and was able to see the other side of the picture when life didn't seem fair.

In verses 27 & 28 He concluded...

“Those who are far from You will perish. You destroy all who are unfaithful to You. But as for me, it is GOOD to be NEAR God.”

God doesn't promise Believers an easy life, material prosperity, or earthly fame. But He does promise us power to overcome the world, spiritual prosperity, and eternal glory. What more could we want?

So, what DO we need to succeed, and how do we get it?

We need JOY.

King David knew where to find joy. In Psalm 16:11 he wrote...

”In Thy presence is fullness of joy.”

Not just joy - but “fullness” of joy.

Fullness means to have plenty of – to be filled to satisfaction.

Isn't the fact that we can have joy in God's presence enough to make us want to come to Him? Unfortunately, not.

So, what draws us to Him?

Jesus knew. In Matthew 11:28 he said...

“Come unto me all ye that are WEARY and HEAVY LADEN and I will give you REST.”

Burdens and trials make us weary and heavy laden.

And God allows these to come into our lives to draw us to Himself.

When we come to Him in need, we receive His peace and joy that satisfies.

***** IN THE PRESENCE OF JEHOVAH *****

James 1:2-4 talks about joy in an unusual way. I had a bit of a problem accepting what it had to say, until I took each verse and thought it through. Do that with me.

Verse two says..

"Count it all JOY when you fall into divers (or various) temptations." You've got to be kidding. Who wants to be tempted, much less be told to enjoy it? There has be more to this.

Verse three reads...

“Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." So what if I'm patient? It benefits everyone else but me. I'm not buying into this yet. I'll read on.

Verse four continues...

"But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire." That's easy to say and impossible to do. It's too hard to strive for something I can't ever achieve.

But wait, that's not the end of the verse. It goes..

"that ye may be perfect and entire, WANTING NOTHING."

**Bingo! The prize! WANTING NOTHING". That translates to me...
peace, contentment, being satisfied.**

There's that fullness of joy idea. Isn't that what we all really want, to be anxious for nothing? If the only way to achieve satisfaction is to go through trials, then let the trials roll!

Well, let's connect these thoughts.

We're drawn into God's presence through God-ordained trials.

Trials bring joy, because they teach us to be God-sufficient.

And when we're God-sufficient we're totally satisfied.

Now, let's make another connection.

To do this, I want to go to an Old Testament story in the book of Nehemiah that contains a dynamic Biblical truth.

Here's the setting.

In 586 BC, Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed by the Babylonians. Persia then conquered Babylon in 539 BC. The Persian king, moved by the Lord, allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuilt the temple. Sometime later the Lord commissioned Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of the city. Despite tremendous opposition, he completed the task. Then he prepared the Israelites to once again worship God. Assembling the people together, he had Ezra read the Book of the Law from daybreak until noon. The people stood and listened attentively. Ezra praised the Lord, and the people lifted their hands and responded "Amen" "Amen". Then they bowed down and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

As they listened to God's Word they were convicted, and wept, but Nehemiah said to them..."Do not grieve, for the JOY OF THE LORD is your strength." The people confessed their sin, and celebrated with great joy, because they understood the Word of the Lord. This reading continued every day for an entire month. They heard what they had neglected to do and then obeyed the Lord. This obedience gave them even greater joy. Spending time in the presence of the Lord had brought them clarity of mind, conviction, cleansing and commitment which resulted in exceeding great joy.

The key verse is Nehemiah 8:10...

"The Joy of the Lord is your strength."

Summed up, this means...

There is POWER in the presence of the Lord.

**** IN JESUS NAME ****

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Join us on our next program - we'll continue our discussion on power.

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