**The Oil of Joy and Gladness**

**Isaiah 61:1-4**

*“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, 2to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, 3and provide for those who grieve in Zion –****to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.***

*They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour.*

*4They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.”*

**Psalm 45:1-8**

*My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king;
my tongue is the pen of a skilful writer.*

*2You are the most excellent of men and your lips have been anointed with grace, since God has blessed you for ever.*

*3Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one; clothe yourself with splendour and majesty.
4In your majesty ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and justice; let your right hand achieve awesome deeds.
5Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king’s enemies; let the nations fall beneath your feet.
6Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a sceptre of justice will be the sceptre of your kingdom.
7You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.
8All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia; from palaces adorned with ivory the music of the strings makes you glad.*

There is a perpetual joy that exudes from someone in fellowship with the Holy Spirit.  It’s not a shallow giddiness, or a denial of difficulty, but a coveted flow that was evident in the life of Christ.

Hebrews 1:9 says, *“You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”*  Although this passage refers to Christ, it also refers to anyone who yields to *life in Christ*.  A secret to a joyful life is embedded in this passage.

(1) You have loved **righteousness**… This word in the Greek is *dikaiosynē* which means the following.  To love the state of being right with God and right standing (usually within a community).  Do we understand that as saints, we are absolutely accepted by Father?  To know we are righteous produces joy.  The word also means integrity, justice, virtue, and purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking, feeling and acting.  These things produce joy.  A guilty conscience will not. Why has God been spending SO much time refreshing these truths to us – not just for our benefit but for the communities.

(2)…and **hated wickedness**. Wickedness is the Greek word *anomia,* meaning lawlessness.  Believe it or not, hating lawlessness can actually bring joy!  Hating or detesting lawlessness, means to disavow that which brings disorder, destruction and perversion in lives (including our own).  The further we remove ourselves from chaos, the more joyful our lives will become.

When we love righteousness and detest lawlessness, the Lord rewards us by anointing us with the oil of joy.  This anointing marks us and sets us apart from others.

Romans 14:17 describes joy as a manifestation of the Kingdom. *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”*  ***Joy will be crucial in these coming days, to manifest the Kingdom in impossible situations.***

**A ‘lid’ on Joy?**

A cap or lid easily gets fixed on the church’s joy.

**“Your joy will get capped at the point of your last disappointment.”**

Joy and faith are partners.  A church without joy is a church with no faith or hope that God can or will supersede their last disappointment.  Are you holding onto an unfulfilled hope or stuck in a disappointment?  Of course! Then rejoice in truth and victory, knowing that God who put the hope within you will be faithful to bring that hope to completion.  Go ahead and have your victory party in advance!  It’ll set you apart from the defeated and help to remove the lid! Declare truth over yourself and your circumstances (and feelings!).

Of course this cap or lid can stop the oil of the Spirit being poured IN as well.

***Father, we choose to take the lid off of our joy.  We pursue your joy and choose to strengthen ourselves in the Lord.  Anoint us with your oil of joy! Amen.***

The benefits of Oil:

* Beautifies
* Perfumes
* Relaxes
* Heals
* Strengthens tired muscles and aching limbs
* Nourishes and feeds
* Adds flavour to foods
* Fuels