

Lord, Restore My Joy!

By Kimberly Sowell

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. (Psalm 51:12-13 NKJV)

Robbers are among us. They are after a precious jewel—your joy in salvation. The robbers know that their thievery will blur your focus on serving the Lord; they know that Christians who aren't joyful in the Lord are silent, ineffective Christians. How can you recognize these thieves? Guard your heart against them each day:

- **The Blahs:** Are you in a spiritual rut? Are you excited about what new thing God will bring forth in your life, or are you expecting nothing more than business as usual? "...Look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything I show you; for you were brought here so that I might show them to you" (Ezek. 40:4b NKJV).
- **Self-absorption:** Whether it's a painful loss, a trying relationship, or even something as wonderful as redecorating your living room, we sometimes fall into the trap of turning our focus inward to our personal needs, instead of looking out for the needs of others. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others (Phil. 2:3-4 NKJV).
- **Anger:** Anger and joy repel one another. When anger looms in the corners of your heart, joy will find the nearest exit. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret - it only causes harm (Psalm 37:8 NKJV).
- **A Critical Spirit:** Have you assumed the role of Chief Critic - in your church, your home, or your workplace? Those who are looking for flaws in others are usually able to find what they're looking for, all at the expense of a light heart and joyful spirit. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the hearts (Proverbs 21:2 NKJV).

Let this be the year when you overflow with the joy of your salvation. Your spiritual joy will nourish your soul until you cannot help but tell others about the wonderful Savior, leading people to Jesus Christ. Let's get excited about the salvation of the Lord!