

Hidden Manna

by John Hames

The sermon explores the concept of hidden joy in Christianity, which is experienced by believers who have a deep relationship with God and live a life of obedience and sacrifice.

Scripture: Job 28:7

Topics: "Christian Joy", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

John Hames preaches about the hidden joys that believers experience as they overcome challenges and obstacles in their faith journey. These hidden joys include the assurance of forgiveness and a clean heart, the delight found in the Word of God, freedom from guilt and sinful habits, the joy of Christian fellowship and sacrificial service, the deep communion with God that transforms sorrows into gladness, and the lively hope that transcends earthly circumstances.

Transcript

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna" (Rev. 2:17).

There are three hidden things referred to in the Word of God which greatly interest the writer. One is found in Job 28:7, 8, which reads as follows: "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." The other is found in Col. 3:2, 3, which reads as follows: "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." The third one is in the text, viz., "Hidden manna." Here in these three passages an illusion is made first to the hidden path, viz., "the highway of holiness." Second, to the hidden life, or rather the deep spiritual union that the believer has with Jesus. Third, to the high-class soul food which the believer partakes of daily.

If we were permitted to modernize the text it would read as follows: "To him that overcometh will I give a continual feast of joy." All that the world and carnal professors seem to see in Christianity is the cross, the hammer, the spear and the rugged side of things, but those who accept, obey and fully follow Jesus find Him to be the "Rose of Sharon," the "Lily of the Valley" and the "One altogether lovely."

Let us notice some phases of this hidden joy upon which the godly continually feed.

1. It is the joy which springs from an unclouded assurance that our sins are forgiven, the past all under the blood, our hearts made clean and holy, and the Holy Ghost abiding within. Oh, this is heaven below! It is

no marvel that the poet asked the following question:

"Is not this the land of Beulah,
Blessed, blessed land of light,
Where the flowers bloom forever,
And the sun is always bright?"

2. The next class of hidden joy that the fully abandoned believer feeds upon is the joy which he extracts from the Word of God. To sinners and worldly-minded church members, the Bible is a dry, uninteresting book, but to the soul who has the Holy Ghost abiding within, it is sweeter than honey in the honeycomb. "The Bible," says one, "is like a garden of spices, in which you may walk, and at your leisure pluck the flowers and gather the fruits of the Eden of God."

3. The third denomination of hidden joy found in Christ by the devout believer is the joy that arises from the fact that he has been made free indeed from the chains of guilt, habit and custom. When he can pass the saloon without the least hankering for strong drink, when he can hold a clean, chaste conversation without occasionally polluting it with foul profanity, when he can pass the gambling dens and fashion shops without the least desire to partake of their evil practices, his joy becomes almost uncontrollable.

4. The hidden joy of Christian fellowship is the next denomination of unspeakable joy. Heretofore he had enjoyed, to some extent, the society and association of his family and choice friends, but lo and behold, on finding the hidden path, hidden life and hidden bread, he finds himself more delighted and at home with the most humble follower of the Lord Jesus than he does in the presence of the lords and nobles of earth. No marvel it was said by them of old, "See how these Christians love!" No wonder that they stood together, suffered together, rejoiced together and died together. O matchless love divine!

The next source of hidden joy upon which the believer continually feasts is the joy of sacrifice. We admit it is like extracting teeth to get some church members to do, give or suffer anything for the cause of God. But to those who have the enthroned Christ it is an occasion of great joy when they are called forth to do, give or suffer for His cause. Acts 5:41 This class of people have experienced what it means to rejoice because they are counted worthy to suffer for their blessed Lord.

Still another phase of the hidden joy that the believer finds is the joy of communion with God. To our minds, this joy surpasses any of the before mentioned ones. This communion turns a barren wilderness into a blooming flower garden; it turns sorrow into gladness, night into morning, winter into spring, death into life, and hell into heaven. O hallelujah! How could John grow lonesome on the barren Isle of Patmos while holding such unbroken communion with his blessed Redeemer?

The last phase of this hidden joy upon which the believer continually feeds is that which springs from his lively hope. No matter how dark things may grow around him, or how his plans and earthly hopes are blasted, he spreads the wings of hope and in his imagination flies beyond the bounds of time and perches on the tree of life, and there refreshes his soul with anticipations of future reward. His hope is so full of immortality that he lives both in heaven and on earth at the same time. (2 Cor. 12:3.)

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