

SNACK FOOD FOR THE SOUL

DEVOTIONALS THAT ENHANCE YOUR
THOUGHT LIFE. INSPIRED BY THE BOOK,
THE POWER OF PERSPECTIVE.

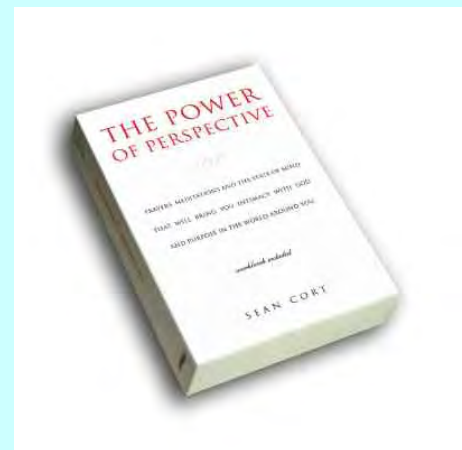
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WEEK OF 2/7/2011

Feast on this...

**HAPPINESS IS YOUR MOOD; JOY IS
YOUR NATURE**

Have you ever encountered someone who was in worse shape than you but somehow they managed to cheer you up? Imagine visiting someone in the hospital or in hospice care who



should be so down and out but there is a spark that comes from within them that seems to catch on and warms you all over. On the flip side our world is filled with folks who have millions of dollars in the bank yet their lives appear as big and empty mansions that are emotionally and spiritually bankrupt.

It seems like every few weeks we hear about our Western culture's version of royalty; our Hollywood "A list", our mega million price tagged athletes and our iconic singers. One from each category has slipped up again and done one of the very things that our parents warned us not to do when we were children. We utter to ourselves that "if we had their money, we would never cause so much problems. We would pay off our bills and live quietly under the radar. Imagine how much joy we could bring our loved ones with ten million dollars in the bank."

Ah, there's a funny thing about the words happiness and joy. They are so similar but their difference can literally mean life and death. Happiness is often tied to someone's state of mind characterized conditionally by love, work, family, social status and proximity to other happy people. Joy on the other hand is one's ability to be content and at peace despite the external conditions mentioned.

In my 20 plus years in media and ministry I have encountered some of the wealthiest celebrities, politicians, surgeons and even ambassadors who never cracked a smile or had a kind word to say about anyone or anything. Yet I have sat in the company of the impoverished and homeless who were so hospitable you would think they were real estate developers.

I sat by the bedside of the terminally ill who smiled and looked back at their brief life like it were a wonderful nursery rhyme filled with smiles and familiar melodies. I've encountered victims of horrible crimes who were as quick to embrace and forgive their perpetrators as they would forgive their own child for breaking a toy.

What is this wonderful resource that these remarkable people share? It's a comforting old friend called joy, joy joy. What is the source of this joy? Jesus. There is now reserach called the [Psychology of Happiness](#), and at the

core of these studies is one's spirituality. Joy is the assurance and richness you feel deep within despite the deficit in your bank account.

Joy is that invisible umbrella that seems to shield you through the most difficult storms in your life. Joy is the warm smile you greet everyone with that enters your hospital room despite the doctor's report. Joy is the identity you still have and the purpose you still feel the need to pursue despite the fact you are suddenly unemployed. Joy is the embrace and forgiveness you extend when your pride and your emotions tell you to react otherwise. Joy tells you to pick up the phone and cheer someone up even though you just received some bad news.

Joy tells you to say good morning to the valley of dead bones who may be your co-workers or family members even though they won't say it in return. Happiness is a shy individual who only comes out on her own conditions. She will be the smiling patient but the prognosis needs to be a good one. She may show on the face of the celebrity, the homeless and the ones we love, but their needs to be some conditions attached.

These conditions need to be fulfillment in love, work, family, good health, status and the proximity to other happy people. The need for these criteria doesn't make her a bad person at all, they simply need to be around so that she is at her best and others may get the benefit of her company.

Joy and happiness are great together but you can certainly have joy when the happenstance that supports happiness is taken away. Joy will make you want to stick around to see what's around the corner even though you've been through a tough season. Joy will encourage you to not let a rough season become your climate. When you feel beat down and discouraged, joy will remind you of something miraculous in your past that will connect you to something amazing about your present. The smile that comes to your face will appear like the sunset that amazes all who surround you.

Joy is a chain reaction that is truly contagious because of the healing virtue of its transparency. Happiness may change your mood but joy can change your nature.

OUR WEEKLY LIFE ENHANCEMENT CLASSES ARE HELD ON THURSDAY EVENING FROM 7 TO 8:15 AT THE CELEBRATION OF PRAISE CHURCH OF GOD, 3700 SOUTH HIGHWAY 27. CLERMONT, FL. 34711.

DUE TO UNFORSEEN CHALLENGES, LAST WEEK'S CLASS WAS CANCELED. THIS WEEK'S MULTI-SERIES TOPIC WILL BE: "**THE POWER OF WORSHIP; FINDING PEACE WHEN HE IS SILENT**"

OUR SNACK FOOD TEAM OF PRAYER WARRIORS ARE ALWAYS WILLING AND ABLE TO HONOR YOUR PRAYER REQUESTS BY SIMPLY REPLYING TO THIS EMAIL.

YOU ARE NEVER ALONE AS LONG AS THE HOLY SPIRIT IS HERE TO INSTRUCT OTHERS TO INTERCEDE ON YOUR BEHALF CONCERNING YOUR HURTS AND YOUR NEEDS.

HAVE AN INDESCRIBABLY BLESSED WEEK!

SEAN