

Jungle or Joy?

written by Randy Starkey | 03/17/2012

It's a jungle out there! I just read a story on Yahoo! of a dad beating a girl's basketball coach unconscious for making his daughter run laps. He's now in jail for a class C felony. Ummm? Jungle. Where does all that come from? From our fallen sinful nature that it seems is creating a jungle in many areas of our society. Road rage, cynicism, sarcasm, prejudice, pride, judgement, anger, no self-control, entitlement, spoiledness, selfishness, unbending opinionation, and other extreme manifestations of the sinful nature are creating a jungle of sour and unhappy people. And folks, it doesn't have to be that way! Time to give up the victim mentality and move on to being a victor! The children of Israel complained and acted that way and all that happened was they lost God's blessing and died in the desert! Or got swallowed up while there when God opened the earth! Definitely no fun! No joy! ☐

The Bible says we are to *"serve the Lord with gladness!"* (Psalm 100.2) So, are you doing that? Are you rejoicing that you're saved, that you're on your way to heaven, that you live in a free country, that you have food to eat and a bed to sleep in, that you have an awesome church, that God is with you, that..., that..., that...?? Sure, we all face problems and issues, but I think God is big enough to help us solve those if we will get out of the jungle and start rejoicing in the Lord, serving Him with gladness, and then asking God how to solve those problems we do have. I'll guarantee you they won't get solved with a "jungle" mentality! You'll just lose the blessing of God! The Lord tells us in Dt. 28.47 NLT *"If you do not serve the Lord your God with joy and enthusiasm for the abundant benefits you have received..."* then... and He lists a bunch of negative consequences.

I was recently tempted to get "negative" over some stuff going on in people's lives and the world around me, and then I said nope! Not worth it! Not worth losing the blessing! I'm going to rejoice in the Lord and all He's done for me! I'm going to bless others! JOY - Jesus first, others next, and then myself last. AND, then, the last shall be FIRST! THAT's where the blessing is! THAT's where the power is! Let's do what Hab. 3.18 says... *"I will rejoice in the Lord, I will take joy in the God of my salvation."* THEN we'll see God work on our behalf!