

One Sound In Union With The Beloved



1000 Gifts, Anne Voskamp.

‘I know there is poor and hideous suffering, and I’ve seen the hungry and the guns that go to war. I have lived pain, and my life can tell. But I only deepen the wound of the world when I neglect to give thanks for early light dappled through leaves and the heavy perfume of wild roses in early July and all the good things that a good God gives.’

‘Why would the world need more anger, more outrage? How does it save the world to reject unabashed joy when it is joy that saves us? Rejecting joy to stand in solidarity with the suffering doesn’t rescue the suffering. The converse does. The brave who focus on all things good and all things beautiful and all things true, even in the small, who give thanks for and discover joy even in the here and now, they are the change agents who bring fullest Light to all the world.’

‘When we lay the soil of our hard lives open to the rain of grace and let joy penetrate our cracked and dry places, let joy soak into our

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broken skin and deep crevices, life grows. How can this not be the best thing for the world? For us? The clouds open when we mouth thanks.'

In the busyness of life we need to find our own Secret Place, the doorway into His presence. We lose so much focus when we rush through the day instead of taking moments to enjoy it and smell the roses. Do we long to be in His presence so much that we love to wait on Him? Do we hear His voice above all the other sounds and thoughts? It is in His presence that we can listen to the sound of His never-ending love and experience His relentless grace.

When life just seems to be against us, it is the Comforter that will hold us tightly. His grace will strengthen and encourage us. He longs to enfold us in His Love, His Peace AND His JOY. You see He cannot be content until we are completely and thoroughly possessed by love, peace and JOY.

Joy and praise come through the outworking of His extravagant grace and it transforms our own emotions when we're anxious, fearful, or distressed. And as we enter into the place of intimate worship He draws us out of ourselves and restores us again. We join in His song over us and re-joicing begins to bubble up.

In the beautiful words of David Van Koevering: "Our worship goes forth and continues on until it collides with the song of YHWH, our song doesn't disappear it is simply enhanced and becomes one sound in union with Him."

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Worship opens us up to the passionate joy of our union in the Trinity. How vital it is to practise and be intentional about living loved from the place of our everlasting union. God wants a Bride who serves Him for no other reason than she enjoys and delights in Him. Those who abide in the bliss of God are the ones who will set the world ablaze with a divine fire.

We are made for celebration and joy. We are at our happiest when we rejoice in someone or something. What a wonderful joy to celebrate your life today Greg - all that you are and all that you have accomplished in Christ. Happy, joy-filled Birthday Greg! We celebrate your journey and the victory lap you're on. And we thank you for the extravagant love and grace you continually show to each one of us! Thank you for always seeing the best in us. Thank you that you are a living example of Becoming Living Love: Living as a mature son, growing and flowing in God's love. And thank you that you teach us as Sons to allow God's light to shine on our wounded/striving ways. Thank you for showing us how to walk this out as a community of grace where we can let down our defences and walls and be authentic and transparent without fear of rejection.

Isaiah 53:3 'He (Jesus) was despised and rejected by men,
a man of deep sorrows
who was no stranger to suffering and grief.

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Jesus the Corner Stone was rejected. Annie Hamilton says in her latest new book "Bent World, Bright Wings", 'He could have done what we do when we get rejected. He could have fled from it. Or He could have shrugged His shoulders and ignored it. But He did neither. He accepted the rejection, walked into the heart of it, and found His identity as the Beloved of the Father.'

Do we rely on the recognition and acceptance of our identity from God or from what others think about us?

Annie says, 'When it comes to rejection, there is a choice: you can sit with Jesus, the rejected Cornerstone. Or you can fulfil the agenda of the spirit of rejection - and panic. And the spirit of rejection does not work alone. Once you panic, the spirit of constriction, forgetting, wasting and retaliation are waiting with open arms. They want you to wish, not pray.' And Joy is the antidote!

The challenges that we all face this coming year are there to strengthen us in the knowledge that Christ really is for us. Our true identity is secure in Him. Let's step into the reality of His promises and begin to declare and believe that El Olam, our Everlasting Father, is good!

Psalm 84:5-7 TPT

'How enriched are they who find their strength in the Lord,*
Within their hearts are the highways of holiness!
Even when their path winds through the dark valley of tears,
They find the pleasant oasis of refreshing
Where others find only pain.

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In their joy it will become to them a brook of blessing
Filled from the rain of an outpouring.
They grow stronger and stronger with every step forward,
Until they find all their strength in You.'

The Aramaic says, "How blessed is the Son of Man with you as his helper."

A life that continually rejoices and gives thanks is the victorious one!
Learning to love ourselves as God loves us will strengthen us. It is the
life of the Victor and the more than Overcomer!

These are the ones that will heal history just as Jesus did. Isn't that
part of our destiny? Tikkun Olam! They will restore the desolation of
generations and the desolation of the land. They will preach good news
to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives,
recover the sight of the blind and deliver those who are crushed.

Can we, as a His Body here on earth, be the brave ones who focus on
all things good and all things beautiful and all things true, even in the
small, who give thanks for and discover joy even in the here and now?
Can we be the change agents who bring fullest Light to all the world?
Christ believes you can!