

# "HEAR YE HIM"

## A Devotional Series For Radio

This sermon script is furnished with  
the good wishes of the Reorganized Church  
of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

World Headquarters: The Auditorium, Independence, Missouri

Program Number 224  
Evan A. Fry, Radio Minister  
All Rights Reserved

The Sermon: WE REJOICE IN CHRIST

Scripture: Book of Mormon, Mosiah 1:108-113.

Wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God; for salvation cometh to none such, except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Lord God hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue, that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with exceeding great joy, even as though he had already come among them. Yet the Lord saw that his people were a stiff-necked people, and he appointed unto them a law, even the law of Moses. And many signs, and wonders, and types, and shadows shewed he unto them, concerning his coming. And also the holy prophets spake unto them concerning his coming. And yet they hardened their hearts, and understood not that the law of Moses availeth nothing, except it were through the atonement of his blood.

\*\*\*

We believe in Christ, we talk of Christ, we rejoice in  
Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ.

One of the best ways of judging a man's character is to find out what makes him happy or unhappy. A hog is happy as long as he has a full feed trough, and unhappy if another hog's trough is full. Some men are happy if they have a full bottle of liquor, but unhappy if the wife serves dinner five minutes late. Happiness was cheap in ancient Rome, where the citizens were content so long as they received a regular dole of wheat and the cruel and bloody combats and exhibitions of the arena. What makes you happy?

We can rejoice or be happy on many different levels, and over many different things. We can rejoice in lust, gluttony, frivolity, drunkenness, merriment, and revelling. We may rejoice over the defeat and downfall of an enemy. We may rejoice over good health. We may rejoice in friends and loved ones. We may rejoice in the well-being of all men, everywhere. We may rejoice in the beauty of Nature, or over beauty in art, literature, music, and architecture. We may rejoice in acquiring and using technical skills, education, and training. Yes, we may rejoice in many things. But on the highest level we may rejoice in Christ, not only that we know him as a personal Savior, but that we can bring others to know him, and together with them rejoice in him and in his salvation.

Some kinds of happiness or rejoicing do not endure. Some day your spirit will

be called home to God. Your body will be left behind to moulder in the earth. No longer will you be able to find happiness or rejoicing in the physical passions, in gluttony, lust, drunkenness, or revelling. That kind of rejoicing will not endure. There is nothing lasting or sure about rejoicing over the defeat of an enemy; the defeat of one enemy is no guarantee that many others will not arise. There is nothing lasting or sure about our rejoicing over good health, or over loved ones and friends. We may fall victims to long and lingering illness; friends and loved ones may prove false, or die and leave us. Beauty may perish. Skills may deteriorate with old age. Only Christ endures forever. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. He is endless, timeless, eternal, unchangeable. There is no true or lasting happiness and rejoicing except in him.

Many who lived before Christ's birth rejoiced in him. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob looked forward to his day, and rejoiced in him. Moses rejoiced in him, and "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure of Egypt." All the ancient prophets of Israel rejoiced in him, but Israel as a nation was not always faithful or consistent in this rejoicing. Because Israel turned to idolatry even while Moses was in the mount receiving the higher law of Christ, Moses broke the tablets containing that law. A

lesser law was substituted -- a lesser law which was stern, unyielding, and in many respects harsh. It was a law of types and shadows of things to come. It was a schoolmaster to lead men to Christ. Yet even in this harsh and inferior law men could rejoice if they looked beyond it to the Christ whom it foreshadowed and foretold.

Many of the people of Israel did not see Christ beyond the law, and therefore found little joy and no rejoicing in Christ. They became complacent and self-satisfied because of their rigorous, formal, outward compliance with the law; but within they were unrepentant, proud, haughty, arrogant, and self-sufficient. "They understood not that the law of Moses availeth nothing, except it were through the atonement of his (Christ's) blood."

The people outwardly and temporarily rejoiced in Christ at the time of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, but there was a large element of boasting and pride in this rejoicing. For the moment they thought that he was the Messiah, the deliverer, the one who was to restore the kingdom of Israel to the glory, the wealth, and the prestige enjoyed under David and Solomon, and throw off the yoke of Rome. They thought that he had come to drive out the Romans, not the money-changers from the temple. They thought he was going to defy the foreign oppressors, not the corrupt religious hierarchy. They thought he was going to approve of them because they were children of Abraham, not to call them to repentance. There was no true humility or repentance in their hallelujahs or their rejoicing.

Neither was there any consistency or persistency in the way the people of Jerusalem rejoiced in Christ. They shouted "Hosannah to the Son of David," and strewed his way with palm branches, garments, and flowers. Yet just five short days later some of those same people were in the same streets howling "Crucify him! Crucify him! We have no king but Caesar! How could they rejoice in Caesar when they had so shortly before rejoiced in the Messiah who they thought was come to overthrow him?"

Rejoicing in Jesus must always be preceded and accompanied by humility, repentance, meekness, and a sense of unworthiness. Our rejoicing in Christ is

always at least partly a rejoicing in the condescension of God, in his goodness, mercy, love, long-suffering, and forgiveness. We rejoice that he has stooped to lift our burden of sin and fear and guilt, and to welcome us back to his household and his family as prodigal sons.

The only way to rejoice in Christ is to accept him as Savior; to bow down before him and worship him with might, mind, soul and strength; to repent of sin in self-surrender, humility, and meekness; to come to him on his terms, not on our own; to submit to the cleansing and life-giving ordinances of baptism in water for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. We can not receive Christ's life, or the abiding presence of his Spirit, on any other terms; and we cannot rejoice in him unless we have his Spirit and his life within us. Only then can we fully know the joy of salvation. If we reject our Savior, there can be only doubts, fears, and the reproaches of conscience, which often result in a restless, futile, hopeless, and never-ending search for happiness in the transient things that cannot endure.

The sinful, unrepentant man can never be completely happy. His rejoicing has a hollow, strained, forced quality that deceives nobody, not even himself. True happiness and true rejoicing come as a result of release and freedom from sin, guilt, remorse, and self-recrimination. It is when we give way to temptation, and allow evil to find place in the heart, that we weep, and our souls linger in the valley of sorrow. It is when we have repented and found forgiveness and peace that we can rejoice in Christ, the rock of our salvation.

Rejoicing in Christ continues only so long as we have fellowship with him -- as long as his light, life, and Spirit dwell in us. Even death cannot destroy this fellowship and this joy, unless we let it. But if we forsake him after having once known him and rejoiced in him, then no amount of riotous living, mirth, jollity, or frivolity can disguise the fact that we have sorrow, not rejoicing. If we continue to live in him, to serve him with might, mind, and strength, and deny him not, then we shall continue to rejoice in him, whether in life or in death. We shall rejoice in him in the day of judgment, and through all eternity.