

Tuesday, May 9, 2017 - The Joy of the Lord

Empty nest syndrome describes a transition period in which many people experience feelings of loneliness or loss when their children leave home, for the first time or for good, such as to live on their own or to attend a college or university. While many parents encourage their children to become independent adults, the experience of sending children off into the world can be a painful one. Empty nest parents often face new challenges, such as establishing a new kind of relationship with their children, having to find other ways to occupy their free time, reconnecting with each other, etc.

The feelings you experience, and struggle with, in the above mentioned syndrome is not specific to just our children leaving.

The need to feel needed is one of the most basic needs a human experiences. What is this need to be needed? It is an individual's sense of significance; a sense of self-worth. Humans have a tendency to struggle with these types of feelings anytime they have deeply invested themselves in any effort which suddenly comes to an end or the amount of effort required is suddenly reduced. The need to fill that vacuum, which has been suddenly created, can leave one lost.

What is the answer? The world tells us to throw ourselves into hobbies, travel, career, etc. Build your self worth which will build your self esteem, etc. etc. which then will make all your "troubles" go away. Unfortunately, any of the worldly endeavors you can undertake have the same threat of end or diminishing involvement which leaves you repeating the same pattern.

The final words of Joshua to the Israelites, in my mind, provides the blueprint for how we make it in this world without constantly searching for something to make our life complete. In Joshua 24:15, he reminded them of all God had done for them, and how loyal they must be to Him. He then commanded them to choose whom to serve: to either serve the false gods their fathers served, or serve the Lord, the one true God, who had done so much for them. We too must make a choice: should we serve people or things; should we serve the LORD? If we choose the latter, we will be eternally rewarded!

Some may not understand how joyful it can be to serve the Lord. When I say joy, I am not talking about mere happiness or laughter, but a way of life. When you have joy in your heart from being a faithful servant of God, it will give you stability in your life that produces peace and hope.

How do we immerse ourselves in service to the Lord?

That discussion will conclude this lesson Thursday.