



JOY: Journey Outside Yourself

By Jan Wendorf

I have an LWML sister who often uses joy as the theme of her presentations. At one such event, she asked those present to create an acronym for the letters J–O–Y. Usually, I think of Jesus–Others–You; one of the groups wrote, “Journey Outside Yourself.”

Perhaps you are like me: I want to be in control of my life. I want to know where I am going, what I am doing, and the steps to accomplish my plan. As I prayed about this, I came to this conclusion: to “journey outside myself” means totally, and I mean totally, to allow the Lord to put me where He wants me to do His will — and to be willing to let Him be the guide for this journey. It means I must step out of the way and trust only in His promise that He knows the journey’s path. The end result: His Kingdom will grow and my blessing is His joy.

How do we begin to discover this journey and the joy it brings? Dr. Martin Luther states this about joy, “There is no solid joy in this world except the joy which the Word affords the man who believes it.”

Scripture is filled with words about joy: *For you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy* (Psalm 63:7 ESV).

Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full (John 16:24 ESV).

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice! (Phil.4:4 ESV)

One of the LWML four Primary Targets states: “Each woman is compelled to share the Gospel, pray for, and recognize opportunities to do so, and then confidently live and speak her faith.” That sounds like a “journey outside yourself” statement!

Joy, the deep inner knowledge of peace and contentment — in contrast to the outer emotion of happiness — has come to me and to you in Jesus, whose life, death, and resurrection give us the certainty of sins forgiven and life everlasting. May God increase this joy as each of us lives as a woman in mission who is daily *IN* the Word; *OF* the Word as its lessons and principles are applied in our lives; and *WALKING* with the Lord in His JOY — a truly remarkable “Journey Outside Yourself.”