

7/2/18

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

You really don't have to go too far in this world to find something that will make you sad. Sin's presence has infiltrated this place where we live, that there is no escaping it and its effects we see every day. We see it in broken relationships. It hits home to us in the form of guilt or shame at our own failures. It's around us as we witness natural disasters and acts of terrorism. Sin has caused many a tear to be shed and many sorrows to be expressed in the sounds of crying.

In Bible times, people would put on sackcloth (like burlap), an itchy and uncomfortable garment, to show outwardly the discomfort and sorrow that was in their hearts. We deserve to have sackcloth as a regular part of our lives. We don't deserve the comforts of this world. God should take those comforts away. Because of our rebellion, God should remove all comforts of life and even life itself. For our self-serving attitudes and hate-filled actions, we deserve to be sent to hell, a place of eternal mourning, where God tells us there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me; O LORD, be my help. You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give you thanks forever.

Psalms 30:10-13

But God wouldn't allow that to be our fate. He didn't want to see us weep eternally, so instead he changed us. He changed us by sending our punishment to his Son. He changed us by washing us in the blood of his Son. He changed us by casting our

sorrows and all of our sins on Jesus. Jesus died for our sins and makes it so we don't have to despair. He takes away our sorrow and wipes those tears from our eyes. He turns our wailing into hope, a sure hope and promise of everlasting life. That changes our outlook and our demeanor. That changes everything. He turns our wailing into dancing and our hopelessness into hope-filled joy. He turned death into life and weeping into worship.

So, let's dance. Put a smile on our faces! Let's sing out our praise! Rejoice. He's given us hope and heaven. All our days let us praise our God who welcomes us into his family. Celebrate his love. Share his love. Dance for joy!

Prayer: *Lord God, you have changed our lives forever by sending your Son. Be with us and help us to always remember the hope and joy that is ours in Jesus. Amen.*

(WELS E-Devotion, Adapted)

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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