

Are You a
JOY
Maker?



Karla Christian

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by Karla Christian

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Interlude 1



A Kodak Moment

A soft evening of fading sunlight. A fine looking family sitting on a quaint park bench overlooking a lake that reflects the sinking sun. Smiling children wiggling in excitement at the prospect of throwing pebbles into the water. My four-year old-nephew took in this magnificent picture of some of their friends enjoying the evening, and in his small childish lingo, looked up at his mom and said, “Looky dhere, Mudder! It’s a Kodat moment.”

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if life was a continuous Kodak moment? A moment of near perfection to savor continuously. Just the thought fills me with happiness.

Unfortunately, as we all know, that may not be the way life always is. I remember hearing a song as a child by a famous singer that said, “That’s life! That’s what all the people say. You’re riding high in April, but shot down in May.” I am not certain what kind of life the man led, but he certainly had a concept of what life can sometimes be.

☺ Are You a Joy Maker?

I am reminded of a song my husband and I performed with puppets during some of our memorable years of evangelizing. We sang the song at the end of one of our presentations about Mr. Grump. Mr. Grump was an old-man puppet with no teeth and a balding head. He hated kids and did not want them around his house. However, they befriended him by doing chores and helping him, and they eventually won over Mr. Grump. They all joined together at the end and sang, “Life is made of ups and downs, Some days we smile, some days we frown, but every day we wear a crown, because we’re kids of the King. La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.” (I really enjoyed it when we reached the “la la” part.)

Yes, life is made of ups and downs—even if you are a child of the King. God has not promised us that the road we travel will be easy, but He has promised that He would be with us, no matter what comes our way. John 16:33 says, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

I remember as a small girl watching as our Pastor Bill Barnes suffered severe headaches. Often during the night Sister Barnes would call my parents to come pray, and I would watch as Brother Barnes would hold his head in such pain he could not respond to anything. In my child’s mind, it was difficult for me to understand why our pastor was

suffering so when he was a man of God. He should be blessed, not going through such a trial. After he had gone through an intricate surgery to remove the brain tumor they eventually found, I remember talking to Sister Barnes about it and asking her why God allowed this to happen. She kindly told me that she had once heard a sermon that helped her tremendously. She said the context of the sermon was that everything that happens in life is not caused by God or the devil for that matter. It is just simply life.

When I am dealing with “simply life,” I often sing a favorite little song of mine which says, “No matter what comes my way, I’ll lift my voice and say, Hallelu . . . Hallelu . . . Hallelujah, anyhow!” (Of course, you must hold the “Hallelu” out to really receive the proper lift to your spirits.)

I work part-time for our church organization and enjoy sparring with my co-workers. They never let a moment go by if the chance arises to kid me about being an authoress and speaker, so I really have a lot to live up to in order that I might keep them impressed. One day we were having an in-depth discussion about the happenings of our day: the economic woes and different things our families seemed to be facing. It was for us a down day.

So, I began to wax eloquently, “Yes, sometimes in difficult times, we just have to pull ourselves up by the boot strings and make up our minds that everything is going to be all right.” A silence followed my statement, and then as you can imagine, laughter erupted.