

"ACTIVE JOY"

Encouragement - we use the word most commonly to inspire with courage, spirit, or hope. Another meaning of the word is "to spur on," "to stimulate." I tend to like the latter. To spur on, to stimulate gives a sense of action, even urgency.

During these difficult times, when we seem to be cut off from things and people we need and want to be with, it's important for us, as individuals and as the church, to be encouraged and to encourage. As the Church of Christ, we have much to draw upon in the text of Scripture, and in the words penned for us in the prayers of saints and sinners, that encourages us on our way.

A Puritan prayer reveals an understanding that Thou, Christ, has taught me/us to seek life and vigor (active bodily or mental strength or force) from Him. Another favorite Puritan prayer of mine shows us the power or force that *prayer* has in our lives. Note the words that imply action, movement:

"In prayer I launch far out into the eternal world, and on that broad ocean my soul triumphs... I long with vehement (a forceful energy) thirst to live to Thee."

The Valley of Vision: In Prayer

Knowing something of the Puritans, these prayers drew heavily on the truths found in Scripture; the Word given to us by our heavenly Father. James tells us to not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive ourselves. "Do what it says." (James 1:22) Paul tells us, "And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." (Romans 5:2) In the wake and in the midst of suffering and even persecution, we are told to **rejoice - a call to express joy, to even be festive in it**. Hard to do, I know, but we are called to be doers of the WORD.

In closing, may I ask of each of you to think on these things. Selah. May God bless you and keep you unto that Day.

In Christ,

John Polzella



QUESTIONS:

1. What have you rejoiced in during these times?
2. Do you allow your prayer life to "triumph"?
3. What urgent needs has the Lord laid upon your heart. Have you acted on them?