

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.... (Psalm 19:7-8)

The soul that has been converted by God's law, which has been made wise by His testimonies, is now made to rejoice in the Lord's statutes.

Although the Bible still remains a best seller, it is not read as heartily as it is purchased. Reading, outside of classroom discipline and occupational necessity, is usually done for the pleasure of the reader. Therefore the reader is likely to select that reading material that interests, challenges, and pleases him. Novels, short stories, newspapers, science fiction, romances and mysteries usually make up most of our reading entertainment. The statutes of the Lord delight a small minority of hearts converted to Christ.

The same is true of preaching. People like to be entertained with stories, cute and clever sayings, and empty emotional froth. The forthright, clear, set preaching of God's word draws scant crowds.

The question may be asked, "Why should a statute be cause for rejoicing?" Have you never rejoiced at the passage of a particularly desirous bit of legislation, a law that promised to make you more comfortable, give you more liberty, increase your financial advantage, make you feel more secure? Of course you have. And have you not also mourned and groaned over an unfavorable piece of legislation that got signed into law? Yes, you have. And we generally bless the lawmakers who work for laws we like, and curse the ones who champion those to which we are opposed.

The godly person rejoices in God's statutes because they are right. The wicked does not rejoice in them for the same reason. They are right and he is wrong. Herein is a test that will betray the true condition of our hearts. If we can truly rejoice in reading the Bible and the forthright preaching of God's word, it is a good indication that our hearts are attuned to God and are right. If we cannot, then it is because our hearts are yet wicked, wrong, out of tune with God, and we cannot rejoice in truth and justice, only in our own selfish advantage.

-C.M.