

Weathering the Storms of Life

Lanie Pope, Chief Meteorologist at WXII television station served as the emcee for the recent Miss Mary's Children's Parade – a patriotic children's event in our community. Lanie is one of the more popular television personalities in the triad because of her upbeat, bubbly personality. Even on the gloomiest of days she delivers the weather forecast with a refreshing spirit of optimism and enthusiasm. Her joyful spirit has nothing to do with weather conditions outside the studio, but instead, is a testimony of the condition of her heart.

So, how do people remain cheerful and upbeat when “storms are raging” and everything seems to be going wrong? It is human nature to let our attitude be determined by the ups and downs of life. It doesn't have to be that way. Instead, focus on how God's blessings can help us overcome the issues of life.

Evangelist Billy Graham summed it up by saying, “For Christians, life is more about living joyfully no matter our circumstances. This is where we have the opportunity to show others that our strength comes from the Lord.” God helps us not only enjoy the journey today but look forward to the long range forecast of eternal life. While God doesn't shield us from all that life throws at us His promises help us overcome them. Listen to these key verses of how, through faith, we can remain joyful on life's journey:



Lanie Pope, Sarah Morgan, 4th of July Queen Haley McDonough and Mayor Dawn Morgan – at the Miss Mary's Children's Parade

- **Optimism about today:** *This is the day which the LORD has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24).*
- **When you feel weary and overwhelmed:** *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30).*
- **A cheerful heart:** *A cheerful heart brings a smile to your face; a sad heart makes it hard to get through the day (Proverbs 15:13).*
- **God will be with you:** *... and surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:19).*
- **Living in Peace:** *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid (John 14:27).*
- **Fear not:** *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand (Isiah 41:10).*
- **My strength and my rock:** *From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I (Psalm 61:2).*
- **God will carry your burdens:** *Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved (Psalm 55:22).*
- **Trust:** *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6).*

We don't have to be as bubbly as meteorologist Lanie Pope to enjoy peace and joy, but we can learn from her example. Lanie is a person of faith and shows it in everything she does. A smile always radiates from her face and her joyful spirit helps everyone around her to have a better day. You might think she lives in a television fantasy world where everything is scripted and perfect. On the contrary, she reports the reality of both gleaming sunshine and raging storms, just as our life is a mixture of good and bad. Lanie's uplifting spirit doesn't depend on the weather or the news of the day. Her spirit is positive and cheerful because she trusts God will help her on life's journey. God wants that for us, too, so we can be all He created us to be. Live joyfully and seek God's gifts of optimism, a cheerful heart, peace, strength and a life without fear. Then, regardless of life's circumstances every day your heart will have a forecast of radiant sunshine.

Question: How do you seek to live in peace and joy when there is so much turmoil all around you?

Prayer: Heavenly Father. Help us to trust that you are in control. We can lay our burdens on you and live with peace and joy in our heart. Amen.