CHRONIC JOY® DEVOTIONAL

RADIANT JOY:
LINGER IN HIS LIGHT. REFLECT HIS JOY.

By Jan VanKooten

Those who look to Him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces. (Psalm 34:5)

As I teach a new song or lead folks in singing a familiar hymn, I do direct the beat and the melody, but I also often paint a word picture with my hands. These lines from Shine, Jesus, Shine lend themselves to this approach:

Lord, I come to your awesome presence

From the shadows into your radiance...

When we sing the word radiance, I enjoy combining the ASL signs for beauty and burst to convey warmth and light expressed with great happiness, hope, or beauty. As Christians, we can step into our Lord's radiance, but the real joy comes next:

As we gaze on your kingly brightness, so our faces display your likeness

Ever-changing from glory to glory, mirrored here, may our lives tell your story!

Christ is the source, the wellspring, the heart of radiant joy—and we as His followers reflect that joy. This radiance does not come from our effort or giftedness; it flows from CHRIST: I am radiant with joy because of Your mercy... (Psalm 31:7a).

With this truth held close, I was both surprised and blessed to find this passage at the very beginning of the book of Hebrews:

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophet at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

This passage is filled with the ways God gifted His son, Jesus, with work, position, and responsibility that radiate the Father's being. Consider Christ as:

Creator *...through whom He made the universe.* (vs. 2b)

Heir *...His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things...* (vs. 2a)

Radiance *The Son is the radiance of God's glory...* (vs. 3a)

Image *...the exact representation of His being...* (vs. 3a)

Sustainer *...sustaining all things by His powerful word.* (vs. 3b)

Throned *...He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.* (vs. 3c)

Notice that the first letters of those Jesus-jobs spell out Christ: Christ, our Savior, our Lord, our Friend, and the source of our radiant joy. ***Let us rejoice and be glad!***

PRAYER

Beautiful Savior, the light of Your love is shining, and we are set free by the truth it brings. You call us into Your radiant presence, where we may enter because of Your shed blood. Consume all our darkness, Lord. Enable our lives to mirror Your glory and our faces to display Your likeness. We long to be channels of Your radiance—set our hearts on fire so we can send out Your joy. In Your radiant name we pray, amen!

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What is one thing you could do to step into Christ's radiance?

- How can you distinguish what others call happiness from Christlike joy? Jot down yur thoughts.

- Which of the *Jesus-jobs* listed brings you the greatest joy? Why?