

The Joy Lady Rides Again  
Terre Haute Tribune-Star, June 23, 2018  
All rights belong to Verna Davis, Author

I'm fond of writing, but not fond of writer's block. I'm fond of teaching, but not fond of the preparation for teaching. I'm fond of making beautiful quilts, but not fond of how time consuming it is to make beautiful quilts. I'm fond of reading good books, but not fond of staying awake till the wee hours of the morning so I can read "just one more chapter."

I'm most fond of being known as "The Joy Lady." I'm fond of the times people ask me why I'm so full of joy and why I laugh so much. That's when I get to tell them the reason for my joy and laughter. I'll say something like, "Laughter is the sound we make when we are responding to humor. Joy is the emotion we feel as a result of our state of happiness or delight or well-being." When I'm met with blank looks, I joyfully sally forth with—well, read on.

In other words, when I sing "It is well with my soul," I am saying that though sorrows roll over me like storm waves, though Satan beats me up, though temptations surround me, though my sins are many, I know that Jesus took my sins with Him when He was nailed on the cross. My debt is now paid in full. He defeated Satan with His victory over the grave. I know that no matter how ugly things are, there is going to be a beautiful day when my faith and belief will become visible. What I have hoped for will be what I now see before me. Even on my most sad and depressing days, the thought that it is well with my soul brings me stupendously great joy that sometimes erupts in laughter.

See, my friend, laughter and joy show our source of hope. How can we have joy when the world is full of such evil? It's because as Christ-followers, we have hope. Our joy and laughter during life's difficulties is not disrespectful; it displays our hope for our future.

I firmly believe people are drawn to Jesus more by our laughter and joy than by any sermon ever preached in any pulpit in any church in any place on earth. We who know Jesus and His saving grace cannot help but exhibit our joy, and people want that joy.

Just as our bodies respond to the endorphins released in laughter, our soul responds to the spiritual endorphins released in joy. I'm not smart enough psychologically or medically to prove it. But I'm smart enough spiritually to know it's true. Laughter is balm to our spirits. Hope is soothing to our souls. Joy is evidence of our security in Jesus.

Another thing I know: Satan is really not fond of the sound of Christians laughing together.

"Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy...The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy," (Psalm 126:2-3.)

And that, my friend, is why I can laugh.