

Hope For The Rancher Devotional

“THE JOY...”

All of us as ranchers and cow-calf operators know firsthand the overwhelming joyous scene as a fairly new born calf is let of out its stall and the barn for the first time. With tails high and a faint bellow the scene automatically and immediately brings joy to our hearts. It isn't long and calves are teaming up in small groups and enjoying life! With all the hard labor and challenges that a rancher endures each year to see the new life of a calf come to fruition this scene is truly rewarding and a sight to behold.



Did you know that even God mentions this scene in His Word? He actually does, Malachi 4:2 states this, “But for you who revere my name, the Sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.”

We all know that ranching in general can throw many different challenges our way. Some are far more challenging than others, some are even tragic. A calf delivers breech and doesn't make it, or you find a new-born calf in the pond. The hay crop is down and just about ready to bale when a heavy rain storm comes and ruins its quality. The tractor breaks down and ends up costing thousands of dollars to repair. Just a few years ago an early October

snowstorm hit western South Dakota and killed tens of thousands of cattle and horses. Some ranchers lost all of their stock. Most of us have experienced these kinds of setbacks that can easily zap all the joy from our hearts if we let them.

Without God's love, grace and strength there are times we might want to turn in our boots, the tractor keys and even sell the cowherd. But our love for what we do compels us to keep on going, to never give up!

There is a term that many of us may have heard that truly encourages along the way, "But God." You do know that in spite of all the challenges God is loving and He is always good! He allows these things to happen so we will trust Him more than ever, no matter of our life's circumstances. And Yes, He even desires that our Joy would be full and complete, like a calf let of stall in the midst of it all!

Jesus himself prayed to our Heavenly Father that all His children would encounter His joy and that their joy would be complete and full, (John 17:13.) This is only possible because of what He, Jesus Christ himself has personally accomplished. He stated, "In this life you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world" (John 16:33.)

Encountering and having the Joy of the Lord is possible because we as a child of God are not of this world. We have heavenly, eternal blessings that no one or no circumstance(s) can take from us and besides, Jesus Christ has risen and He has overcome this world! Now that's god news for all of us who put saving faith in the Lord! It is no wonder that Paul while in chains and in prison can write and proclaim these words, "rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice" (Phil. 4:4.)

Think about it, the joy of a calf let out of stall. Let me ask you, how joyful are you? Why not put your HOPE IN GOD AND LET HIS JOY BE COMPLETE IN YOUR HEART TODAY!

Sincerely

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