

How to walk in joy

Back from a 3 weeks trip to Albania. I worked long and hard, I gave my best and even though in the natural I should be tired, and running on empty, I find myself filled to the brim, more excited and fired up about God and life.

Didn't Jesus say in *Matt. 10:39* "*He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.*" This is a great mystery and lesson for us to learn. We will only find life, fulfillment and even ourselves when we choose to pour out our life for others, to give of ourselves, our love, our time, our talents, our money. Jesus even said it a different way "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Sometimes when I am in the States, I like to go to the hospital to pray for people, or to a nursing home just to hug and love someone who has no one to hug and talk to. I go to give someone a little joy but I always leave so blessed. I know without the shadow of a doubt that our true happiness comes from reaching out to someone else.

I have determined this year to smile more, to love more, to give more, and to find ways to be a greater blessing to people around me, might it be my husband, my pastor or the young cashier at the grocery store who is having a bad day. Whether we want to glorify God with a simple and quiet life or we dream of doing "big" things for Him, either way, if we want our life to count for anything, we must learn to serve where we are. We just have to start somewhere.

I heard my pastor say that the best way to find what your gifts are and find your place in the body is to start serving in your local church. Find something to do and do it with all your heart.

I would even go a step further, if you feel lonely, and don't feel connected with people, start volunteering and serving and you will find yourself with more love, more joy and more friends than you ever thought possible. (I know this word is for someone out there!)