

JESUS WAS JOYFUL

- A. We've been talking about the character of Jesus on Sunday mornings: *His purpose, invitation, temptation, compassion, and suffering*; today we'll consider His *joy*.

Joy (Chara)

The happy state that results from knowing and serving God. The words "joy", "joyful", "joyous" are found over 200 times. The verb "rejoice" appears well over 200 times.

Joy is the fruit of a right relation with God. It is not something people can create by their own efforts. (Holman Bible Dictionary)

1. Biblical joy is not happiness, but happiness is a result of having joy.
2. Jesus was "a man of sorrows acquainted with grief" (53:3), but He was joyful too.
 - a. Joy isn't always expressed by laughter; but the gospels depict Jesus as finding humor in everyday life.

- **Sarcasm:** Peter

John 1:42

42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; **you shall be called** [Aramaic] **Cephas**" (translated Peter: **Rock**).

- **Irony:** Nathaniel

John 1:47

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "**Behold, an Israelite** [Jacob: supplanter; deceit] **indeed, in whom there is no deceit!**"

- **Playful Challenge:** Syro-phoenician

Matthew 15:21-28 (Daughter demon possessed)

24 But He answered and said, "**I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**" 25 But she came and began to bow down before Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" 26 And He answered and said, "**It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.**" 27 But she said, "Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed at once.

- b. Jesus rejoiced and enjoyed all kinds of circumstances, during His difficult times as well as the pleasant times.

3. So we too should find joy in our lives as we “follow in His steps” and take on His character.
 - a. Christ living in us is not just an occasion for suffering, but for joy too.

B. Joy is in the primary nature of God; it is His nature to be joyful.

1. *We should be joyful because He takes joy in those of us that are His children in Christ.*

Psalms 149:4

4 For **the Lord takes pleasure in His people**; He will beautify the afflicted ones with salvation. (Zeph 3:17)

2. A **second** reason to be joyful is because if something is in the primary nature of God, and *we don't have it – that invites sin into our lives.*
3. A **third** reason for us to have joy, is that *the absence of joy results in fear.*
 - a. After Jesus' death, the disciples were in a room in fear (John 20:19).
 - b. But what were they doing after His resurrection? They were joyful, because they were no longer afraid.

- They were so *unafraid* they even had church assemblies at Solomon's portico on the outer court of the Temple.

- c. Perhaps fear is one reason we are not more joyful in Christ than we are (financial fears, family..., political...).

4. A **forth** reason for joy, and we don't like to think of it this way...but, *joy is a command* (Phil 4:4; cf. 1:18; 2:17-18; 2:28; 3:1).

Philippians 3:1; 4:4-5 (Gal 5:22)

Finally, my brethren, **rejoice in the Lord**. To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you. ... 4 **Rejoice in the Lord ALWAYS; again I will say, rejoice!** 5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-17

16 **Rejoice always**; 17 pray without ceasing;

Romans 14:17

17 for **the kingdom of God is** not eating and drinking, but **righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

[Let's talk about the joy of Jesus and where He found it.]

I. JESUS' JOY

A. Jesus found joy in God's revealed word (Luke 10:17-21)

Luke 10:17-21

17 The seventy returned with **joy**, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18 And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but **rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.**"

21 At that very time **He rejoiced greatly** in the Holy Spirit, and said, "**I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.** Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. (John 17:13-15)

B. Jesus found joy in obeying His Father (John 15:10-11)

John 15:10-11

10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as **I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.** 11 These things I have spoken to you so that **My joy** may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

C. Jesus found joy in being with His disciples (Matt 9:14-15)

Matthew 9:14-15

14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" 15 And Jesus said to them, "**The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn** [the opposite of rejoicing] **as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they?** But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

[Jesus suffered a lot in this life, but His suffering didn't drain the joy out of His life. So how did He do it! He derived (took) joy from an everlasting unchanging source.]

II. SOURCES OF JESUS' JOY

A. Jesus found joy in His relationship to His Father (Matt 3:17; 15:5)

1. His Baptism (Matt 3:17); His Transfiguration (Matt 17:5)

- a. The word "joy" is not used in those two passages.
- b. But remember that "joy" is the happy state that results from knowing and serving God; joy is the fruit of a right relationship with God.
- c. And when God says, "I am pleased with you My Son" (twice: once at the beginning of His life, and once at the end of His life) --- I'd say that's a cause for joy, wouldn't you?

- d. That's the kind of joy that lightened the load of His trials on this earth during His service to The Father in Heaven.

B. Jesus found joy in doing His Father's work (John 15:10; 17:4)

- 1. We think that we will find joy by planning something special for our enjoyment.
- 2. But the joy Jesus had, came by doing the will of His Father (John 15:10; 17:4).

3. You must know: There is a joy, like no other, that comes from being a part of something that is holy and eternal, rather than self-serving and temporary.

- 4. What did His Father's work entail?
 - a. His Father's work entailed building up weak faith (John 11:14-15)

John 11:14-15 (Death of Lazarus)

14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, 15 and ***I am glad for your sakes that I was not there***, so that you may believe; but let us go to him."

- b. His Father's work entailed finding the Lost (Luke 15:6-10)

Luke 15:6-10 (Parables: lost sheep, lost coin)

6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ***'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'*** 7 I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. 8 "Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 ***When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!'*** 10 In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

- C. Jesus found joy in the thought of returning to His Father (Heb 12:2)

- 1. He looked beyond --- the weariness of His body, the rejection of His deity, and the pain of His death --- to the eternal joy that awaited Him.

Hebrews 12:2

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who ***for the joy set before Him endured the cross***, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

[Can we have THIS joy that Jesus had? His joy wasn't tied to His circumstances. His joy was tied to a single source: His Father

Joy is hindered greatly by "***the subtle irritability caused by giving too much thought to our circumstances.***" (Oswald Chambers).

The New Testament abounds with portrayals of joyful Christians. To have the kind of joy Jesus had, we – too – must go to the source of it.]

III. OUR JOY

A. We will find joy in our relationship to God the Father through Jesus Christ.

1. **Ethiopian** (Acts 8:39): "*he went on his way rejoicing*".
2. **Philippian Jailor** (Acts 16:34): "*he rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.*"
 - a. They had come to God; they were new creatures; they were children of God (John 14:6; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 3:27).
 - b. They had peace with God and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God (Rom 5:1-2).
 - c. Is that where we get our joy!

B. We will find joy in our work for Christ.

1. Do we talk about obeying the Lord and doing His work with a sense of joy, or with a dry sense of responsibility?

John 15:10-11

10 ***If you keep My commandments***, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 These things I have spoken to you so that ***My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.***

Deuteronomy 28:45-48

45 "So ***all these curses shall come on you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed***, because you would not obey the Lord your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. 46 They shall become a sign and a wonder on you and your descendants forever.

47 "***Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things***; 48 therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

C. We will find joy in the thought of being with Christ each day and seeing Him one day.

1. On the night before Jesus was taken away from His Disciples He assured them that their grief would turn to joy.

John 16:21-22

21 Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world. 22 Therefore ***you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.***

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and ***lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.***"

CLOSING

- A. The shortest verse in the English Bible is, "Jesus wept," (John 11:35). But the shortest verse in the Greek Bible is, "Rejoice always" (1 Thess 5:16).

1. Both characterized the life of Jesus.

2. And both will characterize our lives if He lives in us.
 - a. That is, if we are weeping and rejoicing over the right things.
3. Have you found joy in Jesus Christ?
 - a. He endured the suffering of the cross with joy to give you the opportunity of being saved from your sins.