

Joy in Jesus: Full and Forever (John 16:16-24)
That You May Believe: The Gospel of John
Southern Hills Baptist Church
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WELCOME

Welcome! As always it is a pleasure to open up the Word of God together. If you have your Bibles go ahead and turn over to John 16. We will be there momentarily.

INTRODUCTION: Looking for Joy

Whether realized or not, everyone spends their lives looking for joy, looking for happiness, that is sustainable, that is satisfying. The problem that most have is that they look for it in places that are **flimsy** and **fragile**, in places that **can't sustain or deliver** on the expectations we put on them, in places that **ultimately disappoint** us.

Let Down Time and Again

We latch on to something and get our hopes up, believing that if we had this one relationship, this one job, this status, this financial state, one schedule, this one freedom, this one thing, then we would be happy, we would be satisfied. Yet, time and again, we learn that **the joy that this one thing offered was short-lived, it couldn't deliver on what our joy-hungry hearts yearned for**. Our craving for happiness, joy, delight, it continues to surge, while this thing we had set our hope on and looked to for joy, it has grown dull, it has lost its shine and appeal, or even worse it has let us down altogether.

Where Can We Find It?

Where can we find a full and forever joy? What can satisfy our joy-hungry hearts?

C.S. Lewis once wrote that...

“If you find yourself with a desire that no experience in this world can satisfy, then the most probable explanation is that you were made for another world.”

-C.S. Lewis

Made for More

You were made for more than this world has to offer. Your heart hungers for something greater, something more than any of the temporary treasures of this life. I am not shooting down the good gifts that we get to experience in life, but I am saying they are not enough to satisfy the longings of your soul. You were made for more.

Jesus' Guidance

In our passage this morning Jesus tells us where we can find the joy, happiness, and satisfaction that our hearts long for. He tells us where we can find a joy that will not let us down, a joy that will not grow old or lose its appeal.

CONTEXT

Before we jump into our text in John 16, let me remind you of where we are in Jesus' life. For the past couple of months we have been considering Jesus' "Farewell Discourse," which is the time Jesus spent privately with His Disciples as He taught them and poured into them, preparing them for the life-

altering days that were about to hit them. This is all taking place on the night of Jesus' betrayal, the night before He would be beaten and crucified.

The Hard Reality

He has spent a great deal of time building up His Disciples, giving them promises that will fuel hope in times of darkness and uncertainty. He has also been very real about the difficulty that lies ahead of them as well. Jesus hasn't pulled punches or sugar-coated anything. Jesus shared that just as He was treated unjustly, hated, and persecuted, the same fate would befall all who follow after Him in faith. **The road traveled in following Jesus is a bumpy one. Is it beautiful? Yes. Does it bring eternal reward? Absolutely? But is it hard? To be sure.**

Not Alone – The Spirit

Jesus then begins to once again offer hope in the face of pain and trouble by reminding the Disciples that they don't walk this road alone. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to come in His absence. The Spirit would convict the world of sin and lead His followers to truth. This promise is the promise of God's abiding presence in His people. It is a promise of incredible hope. It isn't a promise that wipes away the difficulty of following Jesus, **but is a promise that we have what we need to faithfully follow Jesus even when it is hard.**

Sorrow Turned to Joy

Now, having warned of the cost involved in following Him and speaking to the great provision of the Holy Spirit, Jesus helps the Disciples understand that **there is a light at the end of the tunnel. He speaks of a full and forever joy that will be born out of the sorrow that we walk through in this life.** I've been looking forward to considering this passage together as the relevance it has in our lives is deep, abiding, soul-satisfying, and hope-giving.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we jump into our text, let's take a moment open with a word of prayer, asking God to help us realize the great joy that has been set before us in Jesus.

Father,

Forgive us of all the times we have foolishly searched for our soul's deep and abiding satisfaction outside of you. We are constantly on a hunt to find lasting happiness, but so often look in all the wrong places. We were made for more than what this world can offer us. We were made for you. Please Father, help us to see the beauty and good news of Jesus' words here. Help us to not only see it with our eyes, but help us to embrace all that Jesus is for us in our hearts that we may live in the joy of knowing Jesus now. Thank you for loving us. Thank you for providing all that we need to have true and lasting joy in you.

We pray this in Jesus' name,

Amen

OUR TEXT

Let's turn our attention to God's Word. John 16:16 is where we are starting this morning...

John 16:16-24

[16] "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me."

[17] So some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and, 'because I am going to the Father'?" [18] So they were saying, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We do not

know what he is talking about.” [19] Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’? [20] Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. [21] When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. [22] So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. [23] In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. [24] Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Isaiah 40:8

[8] The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Roadmap

So, again, Jesus has spent time preparing His Disciples for some of the toughest aspects of following Him, but **He doesn't want this to be the final word He gives to them, because pain, difficulty, suffering is not the final word in the Christian life.** The final word in the Christian life, the overarching word in the Christian life is joy! Not just any joy, mind you, a full and forever joy.

Jesus walks us through this reality by...

- First explaining the process through which our joy will come
- He then illustrates the Christian experience of joy
- Jesus then tells His Disciples where this joy is found
- Finally, Jesus describes the depth of the joy He promises

THE PROCESS OF JOY: A LITTLE SORROW, EVERLASTING JOY (vs. 16-20)

Jesus opens up by explaining the process by which our joy will be delivered to us. Notice how Jesus doesn't simply tell His Disciples that following Him will magically rid them of pain or suffering and set them on a smooth path in life.

Gone then Back

No, He lays it out in quite a different manner, in fact. He couches the process of our joy in some words that would be hard to understand for the Disciples. He states that in just a little bit that they would no longer see Him, but a little time beyond that they would see Him once again.

Too Embarrassed to Ask

As He says this the Disciples are confused. They have been confused for a while now. Jesus has been telling them all throughout the Farewell Discourse that He is leaving and where He is going they cannot come. They have not made sense of this yet though. So as they are walking they are talking amongst themselves, asking each other what Jesus meant by these statements. No one knows, but they clearly feel as if they should know. Thus, it would seem they are embarrassed to ask Jesus Himself.

Me at Work

Ever had that happen to you? It happens to me regularly at work. I work in an IT department. I have no IT background. How does that work, you might ask? Beats me, I manage somehow. No, really my focus is on project management so my technical expertise isn't necessary. Nevertheless I find myself in technical conversations all the time and people talk to me like I should know what they mean when they tell me things like, "The jump-drive needs to be replicated in order to synthesize the flux capacitor." I made that up, but they as well have said that half the time. Often I'll ask for an explanation, but sometimes I nod my head like I know what I am doing and ask a friend who knows I am dumb later.

This is where the Disciples are. Jesus has talked about going away multiple times now. They feel as if they should know what He is referring to so they try to hash it out themselves. They have no clue though.

What is Jesus Talking About?

Do you? Do you know what Jesus was referring to here, when He said that it wouldn't be long before they no longer saw Him and shortly thereafter they would see Him again? You probably have a good guess. There is actually a lot of discussion about what Jesus meant here.

- Some see this and believe that it refers to Jesus' leaving to return to the right hand of God after His resurrection and returning at the 2nd coming when He will fully and finally usher in His kingdom.
- Others say it is Jesus leaving to return to the right hand of God and His return is fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- Still, others believe that Jesus' leaving is speaking to His death on the cross and His return is the promise of the resurrection.

There are good, godly, Bible scholars in all 3 of these camps. With that said, I believe that Jesus is speaking to His death and resurrection as this is what is most consistent with the emotional journey that Jesus describes in verse 20. We will get there in a second and I will explain.

Jesus Answers with the Emotional Journey

So again, the Disciples are clueless about what Jesus is talking to here and Jesus knows it so He decides to speak to it further. He does this, not by telling them of the specific events that are to come in the days ahead, but by describing the emotional journey they will go on. In verse 20, Jesus says that

John 16:20

[20] Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.

Seeing the Emotional Journey

We will see exactly this take place in the coming chapters of John. As Jesus dies, His followers are devastated and overcome with sorrow, yet the world rejoiced. As Jesus addressed in the close of John 15, the world hates Him, so naturally it would rejoice at His death. His death came from the plotting of the world. The religious leaders felt a sense of satisfaction in that they had secured their power and position over the people with the trouble-maker Jesus out of the picture.

This of course was not the end of the story though, was it? While Jesus' body lay lifeless in the grave for 3 days, it would not stay there. Just as it had been prophesied by Jesus Himself, after 3 days, He rebuilt the temple, the temple that is His body and He rose from the grave. Upon retaking His life from death Jesus showed Himself to the Disciples. Let me give you a preview of John 20...

John 20:19-20

[19] On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." [20] When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

Glad = Joy in Greek

The Disciples were "glad" to see Jesus. John wrote this Gospel in Greek and in the Greek what you will notice is that the word used for glad, is the same word used for "joy" back in John 16. Again, this indicates that what Jesus was speaking of, when He said He would be leaving for a bit and returning shortly thereafter, was His death and resurrection.

Larger Context – Stay Faithful, Joy is Coming

So let's take a step back for a moment and make sure we understand these verses in their larger context. Back at the end of John 15 and at the opening of John 16, Jesus has just spoken to how difficult life will be when we chose to follow after Him. He promised that we would be hated by the world and even persecuted for our faith in Him.

So why follow Jesus? Here is why... Jesus makes a promise, a grand promise, a promise for something that we spend our lives pursuing, He makes a promise of joy.

Don't Lose Sight of the Process

Joy is the promise, but don't lose sight of the process. There is suffering on the path to the joy that Jesus promises. But that suffering is worth the price of admission into the joy of Jesus. It is worth it a million times over.

Transition

Jesus gives us a very helpful illustration to guide us in understanding this. Let me reread verses 21-22...

John 16:21-22

[21] When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. [22] So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.

JOY IN JESUS ILLUSTRATED: THE PAIN AND JOY OF CHILDBIRTH (vs. 21-22)

So the illustration that Jesus uses to describe our process into joy is that of childbirth. This illustration is so beautifully true as childbirth (as I have observed, not experienced) carries with it incredible pain and yet deep, deep joy.

No Clue of Your Experience, Women

Women, I confess I have no clue what you go through in pregnancy and childbirth. I know what my wife has described, what I have observed, but I know that observation and description could never replace experience here. With that said, I don't want to even pretend to understand, but I will speak from my observation.

Rachel's Pregnancies

Before having children my ideas of pregnancy and childbirth could be summed up by various 30-second montages I had seen on TV shows. I was ill prepared, as most husbands are. I had no idea of the constant toll pregnancy takes on the body. Now, I know the experience for every woman is different to some degree, but for Rachel she was sick for about 8 of the 9 months of each of her pregnancies. And when I say sick, I don't mean mildly nauseous. It was hard. You wouldn't know any of this if you were around my wife during her pregnancies b/c she is such a trooper. She is FAR tougher than I am. I would have been lighting flairs and calling for help all the time. She kept working and doing everything she normally did. Amazing.

Couldn't Do It Again

With all of this hardship in mind during the last 2 pregnancies, there were multiple occasions where Rachel told me that she didn't think she could do this again. It was that kind of hard. And this was just the pregnancy.

Hard Deliver

In Avery's delivery, Rachel was in active labor for near 24 hours and was in transition, when she was pushing and going through the most intense contractions for over 2 hours. Again, I was only observing, not experiencing, but she was in incredible pain and was exhausted in ways I had never seen before.

Avery Made it All Worth It

Yet, when it was all said and done, we had Avery and she made everything alright, it made all the sickness, all the pain, all the exhaustion worth it.

The Picture – Sorrow Turned to Joy

Here is a picture that someone took of Rachel holding Avery for the first time. You can't see her eyes, but believe me, they were overflowing with joy and love. **Remember, this is the same person who had just went through the most physically traumatic experience of her life and she has a smile on her face and radiant with joy.** While the labor was different with each kid, the result was always same, Rachel was holding a new daughter that she would have done anything to meet and hold in her arms.

Joy Put Pain in Perspective

The process of childbirth is a hard one, it is a painful one, it is full of suffering, **but the joy that comes on the other side is so great that the pain and suffering experienced is put into perspective and is seen as a small price to pay for that joy.**

Ready to Go Again

Something I found astounding is that not long after each kid was born Rachel would start talking about our next kid. I asked her if she remembered the pain or if she thought she could do it again and her response has always been that she remembers how hard it is, but it is always worth it to bring this new bundle of love and joy into our family.

Equating it to the Disciple's Experience

Jesus is telling His Disciples that they will experience much of the same. Life was going to get dark for them. Hope was going to appear to be gone as their Leader lay lifeless in a tomb Friday night. The world was going to feel like it was closing in on them, but just 3 days later everything would change. Their sorrow would be turned to joy as Jesus brought with Him a hope and a life so wonderful that all the suffering they experienced up to that point and for the rest of their lives would be a small price to pay for this vastly greater gift.

Transition

So Jesus has told His Disciples that suffering is ahead of them, but their sorrow would be turned to joy in the days ahead. Their joy would be rooted in the fact that Jesus would return, specifically that Jesus would return from the dead after He laid down His life for them. This promise of joy to the Disciples is really a promise to all who follow after Jesus. Jesus' resurrection is for all who have trusted in Him, so let's take some time to **unpack why it is that true joy comes from the resurrection of Jesus.**

THE SOURCE OF JOY: JESUS (vs. 16-24)

We could spend a great deal of time talking about the gifts and joyful implications of Jesus' resurrection. A couple years ago we preached through 1 Corinthians 15 over the course of a couple of months and that chapter does just that if you find yourself interested. This morning we will limit our consideration to some of the primary implications of the resurrection that relate to our passage.

1. In Jesus We Receive the Gift of Eternal Life

The first thing we note in our passage is that Jesus is making the promise to return to life after having died. This is what Jesus means when He says in a little while you won't see me, I'll be dead, but in a little while after that you will see me again, I'll return to life.

Never to Die Again

Now we see a few people in the Bible who are brought back to life after death, but Jesus' experience was different on a couple levels. One of them is that Jesus would never die again. **He promises this when He says, "No one will take your joy from you" in verse 22.** Our joy is found in Jesus, in a living Savior. To make a promise of unending joy we would have to have a Savior who lives forever. Jesus is our eternal Savior who overcame death and will never die again.

He Lives so We Will Live

It is this reality that gives way to our eternal hope. The implication of Jesus' resurrection and eternal life is that those who have repented of their sin and followed Jesus will also rise to life after death and it will be an eternal life. Listen to what Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15...

1 Corinthians 15:20-23

[20] But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. [21] For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. [22] For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. [23] But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

Firstfruits - Preview

Paul uses a farming image here of "firstfruits." The firstfruits were the first portion of the harvest to come in. **The firstfruits would give you an indication or a preview of what the rest of the harvest would look like.** Would it be strong and healthy? Would it be weak and sparse? Jesus' resurrection life is a preview of what awaits all those who are in Him. We too will find life after death and it will be an eternal life, just as Jesus' is.

Rejoice: Death is Undone

This is reason for joy brothers and sisters. **Death is an enemy in this life. It separates. It ends that which is good. It is the source of much sorrow. It halts that which is so often incomplete. And death is undone in Jesus! Jesus overcame death in the resurrection.** Because He lives forever, we too will live forever! Jesus is our joy because in Jesus we live forever.

2. In Jesus We Receive the Gift of Reconciliation

Another reason that Jesus is the source of true joy is that in Him we receive the gift of reconciliation. By that I mean that in Jesus we are reconciled to God. We are forgiven, our sins are atoned for, we are brought near to God, no longer strangers or aliens, but children and heirs. Again, this is only true because of the resurrection.

Risen = Declared to be the Son

Listen to how Paul speaks to this...

Romans 1:1-4

[1] Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, [2] which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, [3] concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh [4] and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord

You see, it was by His resurrection from the dead that we can know that the promises of Jesus are true. Jesus wasn't a con-man. He wasn't a televangelist enticing people to call in with gifts. No, He was, He is the very Son of God. He is God in the flesh. He is the Gift-Giver. He is the Gift!!!

- Meaning we can **trust Him** because He is faithful.
- Meaning He **has the authority** to deliver on these grand promises.
- Meaning that **He has the power** to follow through on what He said he would do.

Rejoice: We can Trust Jesus' Promises

So Brothers and Sisters, we take great joy in the resurrection of Jesus because it is **God's proof that we can trust the Gospel Jesus proclaimed** and that we proclaim here at this church as we strive to follow after Jesus.

He Lives! What That Means

Listen to Paul once more from 1 Corinthians 15...

1 Corinthians 15:14-19

[14] And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. [15] We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. [16] For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. [17] And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. [18] Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. [19] If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

If He's Dead...

If Christ hasn't been raised from the dead...

- Our **preaching** of the Gospel is in **vain**
- Even worse we are **lying about who God** is
- Your **faith is a dead end** and useless
- You are **still in your sins** before a holy God
- Those who died before us in Christ **have no hope**

- We are to be a **people who are pitied** for our foolishness and wasted lives

If He Lives!!!

HOWEVER, Jesus' message to the Disciples is that He was coming back and come back He did. Therefore...

- Our preaching of the Gospel is the most **vital, relevant, needed message** in humanities' history
- We are **faithfully representing God** to the world
- Our **faith saves** and leads us into the redeeming and loving arms of God
- Our **sins have been forgiven** and paid in full. Our debt is cleared.
- Those who have died in Christ stand in the presence of God and will **live forever in His splendor** and majesty in the fullness of joy.
- Our lives are **full of meaning and purpose**, they matter, and are fulfilling God's purpose.

Jesus lives and thus His Gospel promises are true. Remember them. Rejoice over them. They are the bedrock that we live on and because Jesus lives they are just that bedrock. No sand.

3. In Jesus We Receive the Gift of Powerful Prayer

The final observation we will make about the joy we have in our living Savior Jesus is that in Him we have received the gift of Powerful Prayer. Let me reread verses 23-24...

John 16:23-24

[23] In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. [24] Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

In the Name of Jesus

When Jesus says that nothing was asked of Him, He is referring to prayer. The Disciples had certainly prayed to God, but they had never prayed to God in the name of Jesus. Once again, we see Jesus promising to answer prayers offered up in His name. As we have noted before, **this is more than tacking on a phrase at the end of your prayer** that says, "in the name of Jesus, Amen." To pray in the name of Jesus is to **pray in accordance with His will**.

4th Time in the Farewell Discourse

Now I want you to stop and consider the this is the **4th time that in the Farewell Discourse** that Jesus has called on His Disciples to pray. **Do you think that maybe prayer should be central to your life as a Christian?** Yeah, I am beginning to start to think that. I am not sure Jesus could be any more clear, right? He won't stop bringing it up and in the next chapter, John 17 we get to listen in on a prayer from Jesus.

Prayer – Central to the Christian Life

Prayer is to **central to the life of the Christian and it is central to your joy** in Jesus as well. Praying in the name of Jesus and Jesus answering your prayers is something God has given us to increase our joy in Him according to verse 24. He invites us to pray that our joy in Him might be full.

Invited to Talk to God

And shouldn't it increase your joy simply to know that the God of the Universe knows you by name and **invites you to bring your needs, concerns, praises, and heavy hearts to Him**? He wants to hear it all. How amazing is this?

This invitation only means anything at all if Jesus lives, right?

Romans 8:34

[34] Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Prayer Means Something B/c Jesus Lives

We can confidence in our prayers being answered because Jesus lives at the **right hand of God making intercession for us! Does this add power to your prayer?** You better believe it! When God the Son is taking your prayers to God the Father, you better believe that changes things. We should have confidence in our prayers. What a wonderful, joyous thing. There will be difficulty in this life, but we are not alone, are we. We are indwelt by the Spirit of God and God the Son takes our prayers to God the Father when offered up in His name.

Summary

This is why sorrow is turned to joy in the Christian life. We have a future that beyond bright with the eternal life that we have in Christ, and that eternal life is secure because the resurrection proves that His death did purchase our forgiveness and atonement. Now Jesus lives to make intercession for us, taking our prayers before the Father. These gifts are so wonderful that it doesn't matter what suffering we face in this life, when this life is over and done with, like a mother who has just had her child, we will say, it was worth it, my joy is full.

JOY IN JESUS DESCRIBED: FULL AND FOREVER (vs. 22 ,24)

So we have seen the promise of joy from Jesus, we have seen the process by which we enter into that joy, and we have seen the source of our joy, which is Jesus Himself, but before we close our study I want to make sure we see the way that Jesus describes that joy that is found in Him.

We see this in 2 verses, 22 and 24. Let me reread them...

John 16:22-24

[22] So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. [23] In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. [24] Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Fragility of Earthly Treasures

First, in verse 22 the joy that is found in Jesus is a **forever joy. It can't be taken from us.** As Jesus says in Matthew's Gospel, **the treasures of this life are susceptible to thieves and robbers, they are susceptible to time** as they wear down and out. Nothing lasts forever. Even things that we do maintain and hold on to lose their shimmer in our own eye as they stop giving us the thrill they once did.

This is true of everything, except Joy in Jesus, that is. Listen to Peter describe the eternal reward found in Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-4

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4] to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,

Imperishable, Undefiled, Unfading

You see the connection between our inheritance and Jesus' resurrection, right? The resurrected Jesus is our source of Joy and in Him we have an inheritance, a joy that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.

- **Imperishable** – It **won't die**, it is **forever**.
- **Undefiled** – It won't be **tainted, scuffed**, or broken in any way. It is perfect. Mint condition.
- **Unfading** – It will be **radiantly beautiful forever**, it will never lose its thrill and appeal.

This is the kind of joy we have in Jesus, it is a forever joy.

A Full Joy

It is also a full joy, meaning that we get all of it. **We don't just get partial joy, we get full joy**. Moments of full joy in our life are rare, right? Being happy is one thing, but being completely overwhelmed by joy is something that doesn't come about every day, right?

Remember a Time...

Stop and think back to a time when you felt that. Who knows what it was, maybe when you were dating the one you love, perhaps your wedding day, maybe the day your kids were born, perhaps, it was just a day filled with fun with family and friends, but you were so happy it literally created energy with you. This is full joy. **This feeling is exhilarating, but it never lasts too long, right?** Generally, yes, yet **this is what Jesus came to purchase** and bring. He came to deliver the fullness of joy forever! **We get tastes of it now and will live in it in eternity**. This is what Jesus' kingdom will be characterized by. It is hard to describe since we don't know anything like that in this life, but we will and it will be more amazing that we could have ever dreamt up.

And it is all thanks to Jesus, who brought us a full and forever joy through His resurrection. What a blessing it is to be found in Him.

APPLICATION

Let me wrap up this morning with a few thoughts of application for us...

1. THE PROCESS: SORROW BEFORE JOY

Jesus promises joy to those who follow Him, but He also says that we will face times of sorrow as well. **Is that where you are now? We have talked much of joy this morning, but don't be fooled into thinking that the Christian life is bed of roses. There is joy, deep, abiding, forever joy, but God often takes us there through times of sorrow.** The world we live in is broken by sin so we can't expect that the fullness of Jesus' joy would be experienced on this side of eternity. That is what Jesus is coming back to establish. It isn't here yet.

Your Sorrow Will Turn to Joy in Jesus

With that said, let me encourage you by reminding you that just as Jesus promised the Disciples, your sorrow will turn to joy and like a mother giving birth, when you get to the other side it will all have been worth it.

Listen to how Paul speaks of this...

Romans 8:16-18

[16] The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [17] and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. [18] For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Hate Suffering, but Worth It

The glory ahead of us is incredible, but it is for those who suffer with Christ. Suffering is a part of life. **We hate it as it is a direct result of sin**, but we know God allows it for a good purpose and **when we get to the other side we will say that comparing the suffering we faced to the glory and joy we have found in Jesus isn't even a comparison**. Just a mother would face the suffering of delivery a hundred times over for the sake of her kids, we would do the same for the sake of Jesus when we stand in His presence.

God Cares

So if you are walking through a dark valley right now let me encourage you, God cares. He cares about your happiness, He cares about your joy. **Now, He cares about your eternal joy more than your immediate joy so He may not remove all the pain now, but He promises to one day** and when it does you will be so thankful you remained faithful.

2. REFLECTING ON GOSPEL PROMISES

While the fullness of Jesus' forever joy will not be realized on this side of eternity **that doesn't mean that the joy that Jesus offers isn't supposed to be experienced and lived in today**. Jesus' resurrection changes life in the here in now.

- Because Jesus lives we can find **purpose in our life**. Life doesn't have to be an endless circuit of trying to find meaning in various places. **We were made for God** and thus we find meaning, purpose, and true satisfaction in living for Him.
- Because Jesus lives we don't have to **carry the weight of our sin-guilt**. We have been forgiven. Our pasts don't define us, Jesus' future does. **What a liberating reality!**
- Because Jesus lives we have **a place where we belong**. Sometimes it is **hard to find a place where you can authentically be yourself and fit in and be comfortable**. Because Jesus lives those who have put their faith in Him have been adopted into the family of God and are saved into the church. You have a new, extended family now who loves you and cares for you. Even more importantly you have a Heavenly Father who loves and cares for you. **You belong!**
- Because Jesus lives there is **always a light at the end of the tunnel**. We can press on, knowing that all things do truly work together for good for those who are in Christ. Even when it looks like life is going to come crashing down upon us we know that Jesus lives, **He sits on His throne, and nothing happens apart from His loving, wise, and gracious will**.

I could go on and on, but the fact that Jesus lives means the Gospel is true and there is joy to be had in the here and now. Praise God!

3. PRAYING FOR JOY

One final point of application... **Is your joy lacking?** We have talked a lot about joy and maybe you are wondering, "Where is mine?" **If that is you, check your prayer life.** Jesus invited us into prayer so that **our joy might be full** according to verse 24. When we disregard prayer we are only hurting ourselves, right?

Not Made to Carry It All

You were not made to carry all of the burdens of life on your own. You were made to trust God with those things. Do that through prayer and rejoice over the fact that He hears you, loves you, and wants good for you.

Made for God

You were made for fellowship with God **and that is hard to come by when you wont talk to Him, right?** Spend time pouring out your heart, the good and the bad, the big and the small and just watch for the impact it will have on you. You were made for Him so **don't starve your soul.**

CONCLUSION

I'll close by simply rejoicing over **how good it is to serve a God who cares about your joy. The God that we serve doesn't simply bark out orders from Heaven telling us what we can and can't do so that merely appease Him. No, He wants us to find a full and forever happiness and joy.** This joy isn't something cheap that He gives out at no cost to Himself either. Jesus had to suffer, die, and stand under the just wrath of God for our sin that we may have it. And here it is, it is available to us in Christ Jesus.

Find Your Joy in Jesus' Full and Forever Joy!

So my plea to you this morning is this. **Find your joy in Jesus, it is a full and forever joy. The treasures of this world are wonderful in many ways, but they were never meant to satisfy your soul. They were meant to point you to the fact that there is a giver of those gifts who loves you and who can satisfy your soul.** His name is Jesus.

Romans 15:13

[13] May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.