

ABIDE

JOHN 15-16

INTRO: One of my favorite themes of the Bible is joy. Not fickle, momentary happiness — but real joy. That kind of joy that cannot be taken away. Something that is fixed, firm — like the North Star in your soul. This isn't some illusive "carrot on the stick" to keep you coming back. It isn't for those who reach their place of ultimate zen. And it is definitely not for those who's lives are picture perfect.

There is this thread that runs through the entire Bible that smells of joy — a thread of blessedness — a thread of happiness — a thread of delight — a thread of joy. What is truly incredible though is how the lie of "the world, the flesh, and the devil" is that there will be greater joy, greater happiness in doing life my way. Isn't that the lie that your sinful desires tell you — sin will be better than following Jesus. Sin will bring more happiness, more joy than life on God's terms.

If we actually believed that sin produced pain, misery, and ultimate destruction — we'd never sin. But what we actually believe (in the moment of sin) is that this act of lust, greed, anger, or covetousness will bring joy. When I cheat on an exam, I'm not thinking about being expelled and my degree revoked. When I engage in sexual fantasy, I'm thinking about my marriage falling apart. When I use substances to drown out my sorrows, I'm not thinking about the long-term damage I'm doing to my body and my soul (not to mention a whole slew of other sins I'll commit & regret because I'm under the influence of something else). Do you get the point saints! We sin because we think it will bring a moment, a measure, of joy. In the moment of sin we are believing the age old lie — sin is more satisfying than Jesus.

You see - God created each of us with the capacity and desire for joy! It is not wrong to desire joy. It is not wrong to desire happiness. Like I mentioned above, joy is a thread that runs through the entire Bible. I would dare say that — Joy is a powerful motivator. The problem though is that the lie of sin is that you can find joy apart from Jesus! But as we've already observed in John 15 — Jesus is for your joy. He is for your joy in that which is holy, righteous, and good!

Back in John 16 — Jesus is finishing His time with his disciples. Jesus knows they're discouraged & confused — so, Jesus finishes his final talk with his disciples by reminding them of joy — where their joy comes from & how their joy will remain!

TEXT: John 16:16-24 — Sorrow Gives Way to Joy

BIG IDEA: When you follow Jesus - sorrow gives way to joy

Notice what Jesus doesn't say — He does NOT say that you will never sorrow. But rather He says that your sorrow will give way to joy. Let's see how knowing & following Jesus gives way to joy!

#1: Sorrow Gives Way to Joy *BECAUSE* Jesus Rose from the Dead | **John 16:16-22**

A. The disciples are confused by Jesus *going away for a little while* — **John 16:16-19**

ABIDE

JOHN 15-16

- By this point in the Gospel of John — we are quite familiar with the disciples being confused. They are genuine. They are sincere. But they are living in-between the Old & New Covenant. They are what we might call — God fearing Jews — awaiting the coming of this one called the Messiah. But the details surrounding WHO this Messiah is and WHAT this Messiah is going to do are fuzzy at best.
- Jesus, throughout this final conversation (often called the Upper Room Discourse), has referred to his departure. He has told them of heaven (going to prepare a place for them). He has used this phrase - a little while - several times. And the disciples are trying to piece the puzzle together but they just aren't quite there.

B. Jesus promises that sorrow will be turned to joy — **John 16:20**

- By this point we have grown accustomed to Jesus NOT answering the question being asked but addressing the actual need of the heart. And this verse is no different - Jesus does not answer the question but he does address their need.
- **AFFIRMATION:** *You will weep and lament...you will be sorrowful* — the reality of suffering
- **AGONY:** *The world will rejoice* — as you suffer the world is going to rejoice
- **HOPE:** *But your sorrow will turn into joy* — The very thing that brought you sorrow will be that which brings you joy

THE CROSS: The disciples cannot imagine the death of Jesus to be a good thing. However, Jesus is preparing them for that which they cannot see. And soon, very soon, they will actually rejoice (a.k.a — find joy) in the cross:

Galatians 6:14 — But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Romans 1:16 — for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ

1 Corinthians 2:2 — For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

C. Jesus illustrates sorrow turning into joy — **John 16:21**

- A mother's pain in childbirth is the means by which joy comes! She cannot have the joy of her child without the pain of birth AND therefore she concludes the pain is worth it (or none of us would have ever been born - lol).

D. The promise of joy is possible because Jesus isn't staying dead — **John 16:22-23a**

- **QUESTION:** What is the ultimate source of joy for the disciples? **ANSWER:** Jesus is going to rise from the dead!
- **TRUTH:** The reality of the resurrection is the ultimate joy for the follower of Christ. It is that thing on which joy can be hung and sustained.
- **BIBLICAL EVIDENCE:** Notice how one of these weary, discouraged disciples talk after the resurrection:

1 Peter 1:8 — *Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,*

1 Peter 1:13-14 — *But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.*

- **TRUTH:** *And no one will take your joy from you* — God's good desire for you is that your joy is fixed like the North Star IN HIM!

Habakuk 3:17-18 — *Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.*

- **QUESTION:** Brothers & sisters — is your joy fixed in the reality that Jesus conquered sin & death? Is your joy fixed in the reality that because Jesus lives, you will too? Is your joy fixed on eternal truths that cannot change or is your joy attached to the fickle things of this life? Is your joy tossed like a ship on the sea?
- **REMINDER:** Jesus gives His disciples THEN & His disciples TODAY a truth for joy — I'm going to rise from the dead! Find joy in this — Jesus wins!

#2: Sorrow Give Way to Joy BECAUSE Jesus Entitles You to Pray to the Father | John 16:23b-24

At first this might seem random — Jesus goes from the resurrection (I will see you again) to prayer. Is there a connection or is this random?

I believe there is a powerful connection in the text — Jesus has been walking His followers through what it is going to be like when He is gone. One theologian said it this way — Jesus is working through every contingency to help His disciples know He isn't abandoning them.

FOR INSTANCE: When mom goes out of town, she better prepare some contingencies — like what the kids are going to wear to school each day; what food is going to be eaten at every meal; the schedule for drop off, pick up, sports, lessons, bed time, etc...and even when Mom does prepare for every contingency, Dad typically ignores them all anyway and just gets pizza and might even skip a few extra-circulars.

Think with me about a few of the contingencies Jesus has outlined for his disciples: #1 — abiding in Christ and bearing fruit. #2 — apart from me you can do nothing. #3 — the priority of prayer if you are going to bear fruit. #4 — You're going to be hated by the world but that's okay. #5 — The Helper is coming & it will be even better. #6 — the Helper is going to guide you into all truth concerning me.

And now Jesus is wrapping up his final encouragement to His disciples — He's told them of the resurrection and that they will know unmovable joy because of the resurrection. But now, He is going to tell them that their relationship with God the Father is going to look categorically different. The way in which they will relate to God is going to change forever!

A. A Radically New Way to Approach God — **John 16:23b**

- TEXT: *You will ask nothing* — like you have been asking because you won't be confused anymore
- TEXT: Truly, Truly, I say to you — introducing something new that is coming — a break in the text
- TEXT: *Whatever you ask of the Father IN MY NAME* — the approach to God is now based entirely on your connection to Jesus
- TEXT: *He will give it to you* — as you abide in me, as you are filled by my Holy Spirit, as you are being led into all truth concerning me — God the Father will hear and answer your prayer!

B. A Confident New Way to Approach God — **John 16:24a**

- TEXT: *Until now you have asked nothing in my name* — no one has EVER prayed in the name of Jesus!

Jesus is now the friend of sinners // Jesus is your righteousness // Jesus is your Advocate // Jesus is your Forgiveness // Jesus is your Reconciliation // Jesus is your elder-brother // Jesus is your life // Jesus changes everything!

TRUTH: You can now approach God based entirely on the merits & the benefits of Jesus!

TRUTH: Because of Jesus, you can humbly but confidently approach the God of the universe in the NAME of Jesus WHO is your Savior!

ABIDE

JOHN 15-16

WHAT A PROFOUND COMFORT! You no longer need an intermediary (like a priest). You no longer need a ritual (like a sacrifice). Jesus has opened up a new way — a better way — so you and I can have confidence (Hebrews 4:14-16) to approach the God of heaven!

- **TEXT:** *Ask (Pres. Act. Imp) AND you WILL receive* — because when you are asking in Jesus' name, you are asking for that which IS God's will!

TRUTH: To ask in Jesus Name Is:

#1: To pray in light of all God's name stands for (holy, righteous, good)

#2: To pray for that which will bring God ultimate glory & praise

#3: To pray in absolute submission to Christ's rule & reign

TRUTH: Asking in Jesus Name is not slapping His name on the end of your prayer, but to cry out to God with an awareness of WHO Jesus is and WHAT Jesus desires — which is possible because the SPIRIT of TRUTH is in you and His singular aim is to help you know Jesus more & more!

OUR PROBLEM: We ask for our that which we want...simply put, we ask in our name. Maybe we lack joy — maybe our prayers go unheard because we are praying in our name...for our will to be done...for God to do life on our terms not us on His.

C. A Joy Producing Relationship with God — **John 16:24b**

- **TEXT:** That your joy may be full — not a trickle of joy or a drop of joy — but a fullness of joy
- **TRUTH:** Being right with the One True God brings rested joy (for you must be right with God to draw near to Him in prayer)
- **TRUTH:** Having continued, unhindered access to the One True God brings rested joy
- **TRUTH:** Being heard by the One True God brings rested joy (for He listens and hears when you pray in the name of Jesus)

CONCLUSION: Brothers & sisters — are you lacking joy? I mean it — does your life lack a rested, fixed, unshakable joy? If so — Jesus gives two means for sustained joy this side of heaven...and its not found in circumstantial improvement!

Reflect on this — Jesus lives & because Jesus lives, you have continual access to the God of Heaven! This my friends produces joy!