Sermon series on the Book of Isaiah
"The Gospel in the Old Testament" | Part 64

Joy in the LORD

Isaiah 58:13-14

Is. 58:13-14 If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

I. What Is Joy in the LORD?

> *Joy in the LORD is the deep delight and satisfaction of the soul found in fellowship with God and in trusting Him.*

A. Joy in Fellowship with God

Is. 58:13-14 If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Ps. 16:8-9 I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure.

1 Chron. 16:27 Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and joy are in his place.

Ps. 73:25–26, 28 Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever... But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.

Ps. 34:8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

1 Chron. 16:10 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!

Jer. 9:23-24 Thus says the LORD: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.'

Joy in the LORD arises from carefully observing this reality, as people come to know God, recognize His perfections, understand His love and goodness toward them, and enter into fellowship with Him.

When this happens, God Himself becomes the highest good in a person's life, surpassing every other source of pleasure and satisfaction.

This joy is not an artificially produced emotional state. Rather, it is a thoughtful response of the heart to the objective reality of God's perfection.

Rom. 5:1-2 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Rom. 8:15-17 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ...

To find joy in the LORD, take time to think deeply and prayerfully, based on Scripture, about the following:

The Greatness of God
- He is infinite in His being (Ps. 145:3).
- He is infinite in His knowledge (Ps. 147:5).
- He is infinite in His power (Jer. 32:17).
- He is infinite in His authority (Dan. 4:32).

The Sovereignty of God
- He governs the universe (Heb. 1:3).
- He governs every event in human history (Acts 17:26).
- He governs your life and all the circumstances within it (Prov. 16:9).

The Holiness of God
- He is absolutely pure (1 John 1:5).
- He is utterly incompatible with sin (Hab. 1:13).
- He will cleanse the world of sin and evil (Rev. 21:27).

The Righteousness of God
- He is absolutely committed to what is right (Ps. 145:17).
- He is perfectly just (Deut. 32:4).
- He will certainly establish justice (Acts 17:31).

The Love of God
- He is love (1 John 4:8).
- He is motivated by love (Eph. 2:4–5).
- His love is unchanging (Jer. 31:3).

The Grace of God

- He does good (Ps. 119:68).
- He cares for our good (Ps. 84:11).
- He works all of history for the good of His children (Rom. 8:28).
- He gives us His blessings entirely undeserved (Eph. 2:8–9).

The Salvation of God

- He saves us from eternal destruction (John 3:16).
- He saves us from the guilt of sin (Rom. 8:1).
- He saves us from the power of sin (Rom. 6:14).
- He continually shows us His mercy (Lam. 3:22–23).

The Glory and Beauty of God

- He is beautiful in His very nature (Ps. 27:4).
- He is beautiful in His character (Ex. 34:6–7).
- He is beautiful in His works (Ps. 111:2–3).

B. Joy of Trusting God

Is. 58:13-14 If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Rom. 8:28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Rom. 8:35-37 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Spend time in fellowship with God, trusting Him, and He will make your life victorious!

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Rev. 21:3-4 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.'

Those who have no interest in God will have no interest in spending eternity with Him.

II. How Do We Find Joy in the LORD?

A. Intentional Devotion

Is. 58:13-14 If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Lev. 23:2-3 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwelling places.

Heb. 4:7-11 Again he appoints a certain day, 'Today,' saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.'... So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,… Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

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> *If you... honor the special time set apart for fellowship with God, giving it a place of priority in your schedule and daily routine. If you... learn to see this time as a delight and understand what a tremendous blessing it brings to your soul...*
>
> *– Then you shall take delight in the LORD!*
>
> *To find joy in the LORD, you must learn to fellowship with Him and make that fellowship a priority in your life.*

B. Deliberate Restraint

Is. 58:13-14 If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

- **Restraining Our Pursuit of Pleasure**

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2 Tim. 3:1-4 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, ... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

Jesus Christ spoke about this when explaining the meaning of the Christian life to His disciples.

Mat. 16:25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

- **Refraining from Everyday Activities**

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Mark 4:18-19 And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

- **Refraining from Idle Talk**

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1 Tim. 6:20-21 O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called 'knowledge,' for by professing it some have swerved from the faith.

Practical Steps Toward Finding Joy in the Lord

- Recognize that true and lasting joy can ultimately be found only in the Lord.
- Set aside dedicated time in your daily schedule for personal fellowship with God.
- Make this time a top priority, guarding it against distractions and competing demands.
- Cultivate the habit of delighting in God—learn to meditate on His character, trust in His wisdom and promises, and find your deepest satisfaction in Him.