

What Happened to Your Joy?

Paul’s heart

“What has happened to all your joy?” – vs. 15, NIV

Do you remember when you were new in Christ?

We Are Made to Worship God

The slavery of idolatry

Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods.

Exodus 20:4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth...”

What lust is biblically – “overdesire” or “insatiable desire.”

Most idolatry isn’t worshipping bad things. It’s putting good things in front of God.

We must experience God daily

Why can’t I forgive? Why can’t I move on? Why am I so bitter?

Story of Hudson Taylor, his “Spiritual Secret”

*“Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me
A living, bright reality;
More present to faith’s vision keen
Than any outward object seen;
More dear, more intimately nigh
Than e’en the sweetest earthly tie.”*

We Are Made for Relationship

Loss of relationship

How they met

What came between, and the bigger picture of division in Galatians

Longing for reconciliation

A common misunderstanding

A relationship with God cannot be a substitute for your other human relationships

Gen 2:18 Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”

Humans are made for relationship

1. The emotion of loneliness is meant to point us towards people. This takes courage.
2. The Christian life requires community, anything else is sub-Christian.

Do you have someone that you would rip out your eyes for? (vs. 15)

We Are Made to Know Truth

Truth in love

Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?

Truth can hurt

Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.
Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

Flattery and gossip

Gossip – saying something behind (bad) behind someone’s back that you wouldn’t say to their face
Flattery – saying something (good) to someone’s face you wouldn’t say behind their back

TL;DR – Joy requires trust in God alone, and healthy relationships with God’s people. These two combine to lead us into the truth required to walk joyfully with God.

Questions for Study and Reflection

1. What is an idol, biblically? Why is idolatry enslaving? Which idols are you tempted toward?
2. Who is *your* Christian community? How well do they know you, and you them?
3. What is the aim of false teachers? How do they try to manipulate you?
4. Who in your life can speak truth to you? Do you turn them into enemies?