

Countenance

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Good evening everyone. All looking forward to this sermon that I'll be preaching on countenance this evening. So before we go into this sermon let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, it said in your word that in thy presence there is fullness of joy. And Lord, I pray for your presence to be amongst your people this evening. That we may experience your joy by your presence. Father, it is a delight to be in your presence above anyone else's presence because Father, you are altogether good and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger and longsuffering. Father, I pray that we would experience specifically this evening an emphasis on joy. I pray, Father, that you would bless this message to that end, that Christ will be exalted from this pulpit this evening in Jesus name. Amen.

Well, this evening, I want to point out something that shows up long before you ever open your mouth. I want to talk about your face. Your face this evening. Have you ever thought about what your face actually says to people? Ever asked that question to yourself? What does my face say to people? If you will go ahead and turn with me to Proverbs chapter 15 and we're going to look at verse 13 this evening. Proverbs chapter 15 verse 13.

God's word says this, "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart, the spirit is broken." What this verse is illustrating is that a person's inner state is physically reflected in one's own face. So again, the question, have you ever thought about your face when you speak with people before you speak with people rather. So there's another passage I want you to go to. It's a familiar passage but the emphasis you're going to see again there is Proverbs 27:17. Proverbs chapter 27 verse 17.

The part that's familiar to all of us is that beginning part. Iron sharpeneth iron. So a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. So that word countenance repeated here in Proverbs 27:17 as well as in the previous verse chapter 15:13 you'll see the word countenance. It literally means the face. The face. In this particular verse in chapter 27 verse 17, it signifies how one's encouragement can literally brighten and uplift someone else's face. That is the goal of the word iron sharpeneth iron. That if you would look at someone's face and it looks dull that when you are sharpening that person it can be an opportunity to brighten up or lift up their face. That's what that verse is specifically speaking on. So now we're going from one's countenance and then how your countenance

affects other people. But I want to now go into the countenance of God's face. Psalm 4:6. Psalm chapter 4 verse 6.

This is what God's word says. There be many that say, "Who will show us any good?" Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. There is that word countenance, the face of God. See, this verse highlights the contrast between worldly desires and spiritual fulfillment. The first part of the passage reflects what it looks like in a society that's disillusioned by goods. Look at the word good. It's not talking about things that are given by God primarily. No, this is focusing directly on the horizontal on what the world can give you versus the spiritual fulfillment of God. And so look at that phrase, who will show us any good? This is specifically talking about material prosperity or even better times. So maybe you're in a situation where I'm just really not experiencing any joy and you're saying I want to experience better times of that. But all in the context of the world. The world. David describes a person like this as a person who is weary who is constantly searching for something in the world for happiness and something that's tangible but ultimately it is temporal. That could be more wealth, more pleasurable food, or even one's own social status can fall in that word good. Well, David counters that, and he goes into a prayer and he specifically prays, Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. You see the contrast here? David looks past these temporary comforts. He's looking beyond the temporary comforts and instead asks for God's face to literally shine upon him. That's what the word light means to shine upon him and declares that God's favor, his grace and his presence are the true source of lasting joy. See, anything in the world is not going to have that lasting joy. Only when God's face lights upon us, his face, his actual face lightens upon us. That's what brings lasting joy to a believer's heart.

But let's be honest, why do I use that text? Because in honesty, many of us have lost our true joy. The constant attention and seeking after material prosperity whether you are directly pursuing it or indirectly like you just can't escape it right it's all around you and so because of that and if you consciously then focus on that what ends up happening your own joy in the Lord gets suffocated the more you focus on the temporal comforts, the less of God's face lightens upon you. And so as a believer, we are to be like David to pray. That's the first thing we need to do. We need God's help. We can't do this in our own strength, right? We can't do this in our own willpower. We need to literally ask the Lord to do what only he can do. You can't turn his face. You ask for him to turn his face upon you. You ask him to turn his face upon you. See the danger is if you are a disciple of Christ and you have lost that joy that only God can give that lasts not just for the temporal but for the everlasting. What ends up happening it has a ripple effect. It like I said it doesn't just affect you. It affects people around you and then it also obviously affects the heart of God. There is much at play and at work for your joy. And what does the devil do? He comes to steal your joy, doesn't he? He's good at that, isn't he? So, we must be constantly vigilant. I often use that theme to be watchful, a watchman. And to be

a watchman is to be in prayer, to be in prayer. You can't do this in your own willpower. You can't do this in your own power. You can't. You need his power. Amen. You need his constant power to help you to do this.

So I mentioned about how your lack of joy can have a ripple effect upon the church. Go to 2 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 24. 2 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 24.

This is of course the Apostle Paul speaking to the church at Corinth and he says these words not for that we have dominion over your faith or lording over your faith but are helpers of your joy, for by faith you stand. So here the apostle Paul is emphasizing that as spiritual leaders, this is something I have to be constantly vigilantly aware of. Yes, I'm looking at your faces and you're looking at my face. This is a relationship. This is a connection. God uses our faces to connect each other. But it's not only for spiritual leaders, pastors. No, it's talking about other people, helpers. You see that? It's also you. Your joy is at stake. Your joy is at stake. And that takes faith. Says you got to stand by faith. You got to stand by faith. And so he says in order to nourish and build up the joy of others, this is helping you actually just be strong in your faith. It's actually keeping you in faith. That's pretty important, isn't it? Now look at Philippians chapter 1 verse 25. Again, this is the Apostle Paul here in Philippians chapter 1 verse 25.

We just gone through a series in Philippians, so you are familiar with this verse. He says here, "And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith." See how he repeats the same kind of phrase we see in 2 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 24. Here he is connecting an individual spiritual progress. Furtherance that word furtherance means spiritual progress directly connected to your flourishing of your joy that you have more joy in your life. Not less. Not less. That's part of your spiritual progress, sanctification work that you experience more the fullness of God in his presence. Right? So let's understand what does it look like to then have a posture of joy. What does it look like in the practical sense of your own posture, your joy as Apostle Paul uses that word. You see, you have to understand how to live by thinking about these things. Am I a joyful disciple of Christ? On the grand scheme of things, is it more of joy or less of joy? Right? That's the first thing you got to consciously be aware about as the apostle Paul shares with the church and as I am doing now. We have to recognize that joy is vertical before it's horizontal. Right? That's where faith comes in. It must be God intervening in one's life and experiencing his presence of fullness of joy. That's a vertical relationship. That's why David prays unto God. He must receive his face to be turned to him. It's not good enough that we are each other being joyful in the Lord. No, primarily we need to receive it from him. Right? And so it comes with that vertical relationship before it ever becomes horizontal. See, we cannot transfer what we have not first received from God. It's just like other verses like he first loved us and so we can love, right? He forgave us in Christ so that we can forgive others. It always starts with

God. But we are on the receiving end of that to pour out into others. Now turn to a passage Zephaniah 3 verse 17. This is one of the minor prophets comes right before Zechariah. So, if you're in your Bible, it's right a couple of books before Zechariah, but we're going to look at the minor prophet Zephaniah in chapter 3:17. And here in this part of the passage, I'll read it. Says this, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty. He will save. He will rejoice over thee. With joy he will rest in his love. He will joy over thee with singing." Do you see the repetition of joy in that text? Again, repetition is important in the Hebrew text. So, let's focus in on this passage. What is going on here? You may ask. But what was going on in this part of the storyline timeline of Zephaniah?

Israel previously a weakened nation is now in the presence of the mighty one. And God himself unlike mentioned in Zephaniah 1:14 comparing to the warriors of that day the heroes of that day right just think of today right same idea compared to humans God is on display rather here in the text he does not lose heart you'll see this by the constant repetition of he will, he will, he will. You see that? That means he's not going to lose heart. He's not going to turn away. Why doesn't he turn away? Because he loves his people. He loves his people. He's speaking to the remnant here, those that believe on the Lord. And we see that in the text. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee. Only in the midst of thee am I a believer. You are a believer. It's the same context of one who is in Christ and one is out of Christ. In the Old Testament, God would say, I am in the midst of thee literally you are I am with you as if you are today in Christ. And so he says these words, "You're my people. That's why I'm not going to leave you." And he says, "You're afraid." They were afraid of people, the warriors, right? They were weak as a nation. But they realized in here in the text, you can be weak. We have me as almighty in your life. Who can stand against God, right? who can stand against the almighty one. And so he encourages them that even though they feel that they're in a dangerous place, they're weak, they can be attacked at any moment, he gives us this comfort. He does this all throughout the Bible, namely one area in Exodus 14:30. They were in danger from the Egyptians. They were running towards the Red Sea and they couldn't go through the Red Sea. But in his almighty power, what did he do? He lifted those waves, didn't he? That's God. They were going into it with fear. But they ended up not fearing because of God's presence. You see that? They went in spite of their fear. I'm sure many of them one pastor said this. Some of them were probably really scared and some of them were like, "Yeah, let's go for it." There are two types of people going through that sea of water left to the right. But I want you to focus in on this part. He saved his people. Amen. Just like he did in Exodus, he's going to save his people here in Zephaniah. He says that right at the start. He will save. He will save. But it doesn't just end there. It's not, okay, I'm saved, but what else do I get to experience with God? Notice the next part. He will rejoice over thee with joy. He has joy for God's people. Do you often sense that when you are in prayer with him? Always remember when you're in the presence of God, you experience his joy like

the text says, he will rejoice over thee with joy. He will rest in his love for you. He loves you with that infinite love. And then he repeats the refrain, he will joy over thee with singing. He's singing. Have you ever thought about God singing over you? That was a thought when I looked at this text. It's like, wow, but you know, as a father, I love to sing to my daughters and I know how much joy it brings me as a parent. So, I can picture that on a grander scale. God is singing. I'm a poor singer compared to him or any one of us, but he's singing unto us.

And it's a wonderful thing. But you'll see in verses 12 and 13, I don't have time to go into it, but there were people that were seeking him. They were following him. And then by seeking and following him, his presence was with them. And then in verses 14 and 16, they were rejoicing in him and they were trusting in him. So there was this relationship that was built on them seeking him, on following him, on rejoicing in him and trusting in him. These are all characteristics of followers of Christ, too, isn't it? God personally delights in them. Personally delights in you and you and every single one that's a follower of Christ. Think about it. As an infant, what is the first thing that after it gets spanked and all that stuff and it's all out of the delivery room and they're with you and their eyes open, what's the first thing an infant sees? It's the father and the mother's face. And if they see that you're smiling, what do they do? They smile back at you typically, right? There's something about the face that's personal, that's affectionate, that's deeply experienced like no other type of a way. And that's why God literally designed our brains to understand joy through face-to-face interaction, right? We don't talk on opposite ends. That would look weird. And that's why we get upset when people are on their phones and they're trying to talk with you, right? They're not really listening, are they? because we're designed to have face-to-face interaction. Unfortunately, we're living in a day and age when that's not happening as a norm. As followers of Christ, we should never forget how important a face-to-face interaction is. There's so many passages about that and I just lifted a few. See, true discipleship starts with receiving from God. Got to be receiving this on a daily basis in order to be reflected on your face. See, our souls when we are most encouraged, the most felt that we're being heard or we sense that someone cares. It's not when we're performing, is it? When we're performing, we feel nervous. You may feel like, "I hope I don't miss something." We're so concerned about ourselves whenever there's a performance going on. We're focusing on ourselves. You don't want to miss a word. You want to say something that wasn't there or whatever. So, that never really brings healing. So, you can serve like Martha, just have this idea of just I'm performing here instead of being in the actual presence of Jesus first. Being in the presence of the Lord Jesus. You see, he's not looking at our performance. He wants us to be in his presence. That is most important to the Lord Jesus. That's what we see in the story of Martha versus Mary. His presence is more important than performance. Because when we receive God's delight, when we experience his face shining brightly upon us, what does that do to us? What

does it do when someone is smiling at you? When someone is truly rejoicing with you, you're going to tend to smile back. You're going to tend to rejoice with that person. That's why we have passages like rejoice with them that rejoice. We focused last week on weep with those who weep, but we're going to focus on rejoicing with those who rejoice because it's also important to the Lord.

So when we follow the Lord Jesus, he wants us to receive first before doing. Always remember that. We must slow down to do that, don't we? I know we're coming up to VBS and I didn't think about this until now, but yeah, there's going to be a lot of serving there, but wouldn't it be great for people that were prepared way in advance before we go and serve and that we actually have already been delighted by God and not being primarily delighted by the visitors coming in, the wonderful performances I'm sure a lot of people have prepared for, which is fine. But what is most important is us delighting in the Lord. So let us experience his delight always before we do anything when it comes to the matter of serving.

You want to reflect the joy in this church body or whether that's your spouse or your children or even in your outreach. You do this first. You do this first. Be very careful of not serving before having delight in the Lord. So crucial. So that's the posture of joy. Now let's go into joy is not done primarily in isolation. We've already covered that. It is primarily designed to be experienced and multiplied. That's what I want to focus on. Multiplied in community. You can multiply something, but what is it that you want to multiply? What is it? Something that you would love to see, not just in yourself, not just in the one-on-one interactions, not just within this church body, but what if it extends further out? Have you ever thought how it is to experience the fullness of joy, not just vertically, but horizontally? Has that thought ever come to your mind that it goes beyond what we might even ever think? Because God is a God of infinite grace, infinite mercy, right? And infinite joy, fullness of joy. What would that look like to experience the fullness of joy and share that with each other? What would that do to our church community? That's what I want us to think about. Can we think we can really experience that? Depends on how much you trust in the Lord, doesn't it? Look at Psalm 16:11.

Psalm 16:11.

I used this verse as my prayer in the beginning, but here it is in its full form. Thou wilt show me the path of life. In thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forever more. The psalmist here is linking joy again here directly to a specific location and that specific location is in your presence. It's in his presence that we experience joy as I alluded to at the beginning and throughout so far this message. But here I want to hone in what is it like to experience the fullness of joy. Then see joy grows and spreads in presence. As you're experiencing God and his presence, it is going to

overflow or spill over to everyone around you. It's going to have a multiplying effect. So whereas stress and anxiety grows in the opposite direction, doesn't it of joy. So always detect when you're in isolation, you are in danger of more anxiety, more stress, because those are the exact opposite of joy. Why? What is at the root of anxiety? I don't trust God. I don't trust God with my current situation. I don't trust God for the future. You see, when you're in the presence of God, why are you experiencing joy? Because he's got you. You don't got this, but he got you. I know I'm using very simple terms, but it's true. He's got your life. He created you. He created you. He knows everything about you. See, no one's going to ever be able to understand that. That's why many of us have anxiety. What is that person going to think? They don't know everything about you and yet we worry about them and we have anxiety. And why do you think prayer is attached to in Philippians 4:6, be anxious for nothing? It goes right into it. But in prayer, but in prayer. You want that stress and anxiety of what people think and all that. Be in the presence of God. That's what prayer is.

And you get to experience the fullness of joy there.

That's why I thought it was very pitiful when people on the grand scheme of things on average people spend about 15 minutes in prayer. 15 minutes when you can experience the fullness of joy. Think about that. Joy grows and spreads in presence in his presence in prayer.

And then what comes out of that is the word hospitality. If you look at the word hospitality, it's simply what we're receiving from God's joy, his delight is then reflected around us. That's what Christian hospitality looks like. So it's not you like Martha, I got to work yourself out. No, it's just I'm in his presence. I come out of that presence and I'm serving. That's what hospitality looks like.

It's simply like a moon. A moon is dark. Has no light unless the sun shines upon the moon and you see the light reflection. So we need to be in his presence to radiate his joy. It's only in his presence that we can radiate his joy. Just like the moon needs the sun to reflect light. It cannot reflect light any other way. And so that's how we are to be as disciples of Christ. We need to spend time with him.

So every single eye contact you make this week is a moment to communicate before speaking a single word. Before you even say one word, the true disciple of Christ desires God's presence above everyone else's presence. Before speaking a single word, you're communicating already with the Lord.

You come out of that presence and that communication in that presence. What would your words look like, sound like? What would your face rather look like? And how your voice sound like? What a contrast.

See, if we do that, we can carry out his presence right now in this church sanctuary and beyond these four walls into every relationship that God has given to us as opportunities can be done in the bedroom with your spouse if you have one, or with your kids if you have them, or into your family members if you're not. It can reverberate to the lobbies where the guests are hanging out. It can reverberate beyond that to our communities and the people that come across in our paths. Do you ever pay attention to other people's eyes rather than just only here? How many people's eyes are you focusing on?

God's looking at us all the time and he's seeing if we know that passage whether it's good or evil he's looking for someone who's good what about us are we looking out for that which is good is God going to use you in that capacity or are you just going to be gazing at that which is evil.

It's a very important thing to think about what God is doing is reflected on us as well.

Third part I want to focus in on is let's go and experience the joy of the Lord Jesus Christ for that is the anchor of every true disciple of Christ. As disciples, our ultimate model is the Lord Jesus Christ. We must look at how joy fueled the life and ministry of our savior while he was here on earth. He was deeply acquainted with joy. Most of the time he was actually experiencing a lot of joy. And I'm going to show you that he sustained himself with experiencing joy even in the darkest moments in his life. Look with me at Luke 10:21. Luke 10:21.

The Lord Jesus is speaking here. But before that it says in that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said these words I thank thee oh father lord of heaven and earth that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes even so father for so it seemed good in thy sight. Let me just explain this verse. It's amazing. You see the Lord Jesus experiencing profound joy through the Holy Spirit. Why? Because the father was revealing his kingdom not to those trying to perform or show off. Those are the wise and prudent. They thought they can get away with performing to God in their wise and prudent ways. Said, "God, you're not looking at them. You're looking at the babes, which is another way of saying little children. So, think about it. What do children do? They receive. They don't perform.

So, the wise and prudent, they just want to show off. Look at how wise I am. Look at how prudent I am. But he says, I'm not going to go to them. Jesus prayed for the ones that are going to be as the babes. Little children completely dependent needs to be receiving, needs to be constantly receiving.

Then look with me in Hebrews chapter 12. Here is where we see the moment in his life on earth, the pivotal moment where was considered the darkest moment of his life personally and it says in the text in Hebrews 12:2 looking unto Jesus the author and

finisher of our faith who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Here in the text, we see the heart behind the Lord Jesus and his endurance. What allowed him to face the agonizing pain on the cross. Physically, he was about to experience extreme pain upon his body with the nails being pierced, the scourging that has happened, the crown of thorns on his head, and not only that, but the spiritual weight of all of our sins upon him. And yet in that moment, it was the joy set before him. That word set means literally I set my Bible here and it's not going to move. He set joy before him before enduring the pain of the cross. That joy wasn't a superficial countenance. It was the relational anticipation of this. We see this in the passage of being reunited with the father on the throne and then also bringing us into that very same presence.

Do you see that? Not only is the joy he has that he's going to sit with his father again on the throne, but he's going to bring us along with him in that exact same presence. And it was joy for both. That's pretty intense, isn't it?

There's a lot to learn here.

But I want you to just imagine a soldier who has her own family and has to endure grueling, terrifying conditions on the grounds. The conditions are terrifying. People are being killed left and right on the front lines of the battlefield. What keeps that soldier putting one foot in front of the other? Question to ask. Most of the time they have a picture of their family. They have an actual picture of their family and they're constantly looking at that family because that's what's keeping them going. I'm just talking about a normal soldier. Not specifically talking about the Christian soldier, just a normal soldier. What is he doing if he's a sane soldier that can continue on? He's thinking about his family.

And so he sees the joy in their faces. It's typically a photo of them experiencing joy in that picture. And what does he want to do? He wants to get done with this battlefield and run to them with joy. We often see this narrative play out in a lot of movies, don't we? But it carries significance into what I just shared with the Lord Jesus. He endured way more than any soldier can ever experience in a battlefield. But he was set before him the joy that he will get to see each and one of us. The battle that he's going to win for us and to bring us on the other side in the father's presence. He was thinking about that. What does that do to you? That's very, very intimate, isn't it? When you think of it that way, he fought. He bled. He experienced horrific pain for us.

The joy of future reunion with his father fueled the very endurance to go through the present pain. See the Lord Jesus regularly before any of this ever happened. Here's what was going on before this moment. You will notice that he regularly withdrew to receive

love from his father in prayer. You can look at passages like Luke 5:15-16, Luke 6:12-13, Luke 22:41-42. See before that moment on the cross, he was spending lots of time in the presence of God the father.

See the preparatory work for us.

His love, the father's love, the father's joy was experienced over and over again. How much more do we need to experience that? If the Lord Jesus had to do it, how much more do we?

Jesus needed to receive the presence from his father constantly. How much more do we? You see, we all face our own crosses as disciples of Christ. Jesus said, "Take up your cross daily and follow me." And so we are bearing crosses if you are disciple of Christ. That's the reality. So here is where I want by explaining and now helping you to bear the kind of crosses that you are bearing right now. Every day as you're following the Lord Jesus, every day as you're sacrificing your time to serve those that are receiving and those that are not, you are bearing that cross. You're dealing with difficult people. Whether it's through unjust suffering or whether just through the everyday course of life, you're experiencing difficult people because we're living amongst sinful people. I included.

We're navigating personal trials. Everyone is experiencing personal trials in this room. You are bearing that cross as well. And then you're bearing a cross that Jesus specifically has for you in your calling. Every disciple of Christ is called to something by the Lord. Some of you already know what that is and you have been enduring for many, many years and decades. Some of you are just understanding what that is. But God has called you to something to bear for him.

You see, you can endure it because of the joy set before you. He is giving you joy to experience the endurance. You see, joy is a thing that connects with your endurance. That's what we see in the bearing of the cross. Joy comes before endurance. Joy comes before endurance. That must set before you. That's what's going to keep you enduring to continue to serve, continue dealing with difficult people, continue to dealing with your personal trials, continuing to do the thing that God, the Lord Jesus specifically called you to do, a vocation, a call, and that out of what you're doing, you should know that you are fully loved. You are fully accepted in the beloved and you are securely held by God in Christ. Remember Zephaniah we have to understand what we have all in Christ. There is so much to experience in the Lord. So becoming a people of this kind of presence. How do we do that? Well, we got to deeply understand the spiritual well that God has given to each and one of us.

We can then minister out of being filled in our spiritual well to people one face, one person, one moment at a time.

Think about it. The Lord Jesus had conversations at the well with the Samaritan woman. A personal face-to-face, one person moment in time. What about the radical grace shared around meals with publicans and sinners? He was doing it so much that the religious rulers of that day were saying, "You're spending too much time with them." Right? He spent a lot of time with publicans and sinners. And then we recall the quiet discussion he had one-on-one, face to face in the middle of the night with Nicodemus.

All those instances show that he was fully present in every situation with every person. And he calls us to do the same thing. So be intentional as the word of God gives you comfort, gives you clarity, gives you understanding of what you have in Christ. You have the joy and you can experience the fullness of him in his presence in your prayer time. Think about that joy in your prayer time. Think about the authentic relationship that you have with God in Christ. And then you have the authentic relationships with your brothers and sisters in Christ. And it spills over the other areas of your life. What would happen if you had that true connection that goes beyond a room, beyond your home, beyond your workplace, beyond this church sanctuary. They have a greater concern over the look on the faces of people around you that you start noticing more of that, the countenance of people's faces. Consider we live in a world of AI where yes, more time is spent looking down at a device than looking up at a person. And it's getting worse and worse. But as a church community, we have to resist that. But the strength of Christ, we need to resist that. We need to realize the world we live in and how much I believe this is needed not only amongst us brothers and sisters in Christ but the world they're empty right now because this is not the way God designed us to be on a device all the time. That's not how God created us to be. That's why we have passages after passage about face-to-face connections with the Lord Jesus giving us examples after examples of his time with people fully present. So what can you do then? What does it how does it come out when you're speaking with people when you're experiencing joy? Because this is what happens when you're experiencing joy. The words that come out of my mouth is I am glad you're here. I am glad that you actually exist right here with me.

I am glad you're here and I am glad you exist here right here with me. I don't get this kind of experience anywhere else than when it's face to face. That's what joy helps manifest in our words.

Every human interaction can be the most important moment in your life and in the life of another person. Think about the moments you have with God in his presence when you're delighting him. When you're experiencing his love, his grace, his mercy, all these things and you're pouring that out into other people and then that's being poured into you by believers in Christ. What kind of connections would that do in our church? What kind of stories will come out from those experiences, the testimonies and the growth in your spiritual walk? Because you're sharpening each other up in this area.

So, let's take moments tonight in prayer for this specific thing in our church. That we will radiate the joy of God from his presence out to each and one of us and that we'll do more of these one anothers that the New Testament church is supposed to be like the one another experiences. Let's do tonight the one anothers of praying for one another. Amen. That we would experience more of his presence and the fullness of his joy. All right, let me close out in prayer. Thank you, Father, that we have joy in your presence. Father, I thank you that we don't have to perform anything to you because Jesus did the ultimate work on the cross. Thank you that he verbally said it is finished. So that we know it is. And that you want us to just depend upon you as babes, as little children that you want us to receive before we can give. Father, there are maybe some here that have never even experienced receiving from the Lord, namely salvation in him. I pray that you would show them their emptiness. And the reason why they're empty is because nothing can fill the void in their soul except the salvation in the Lord. For he is the only one that we can be saved from our sins. That we can be purchased by his precious blood and be fully redeemed by the payment being made in full on the death on the cross and this outpouring of his blood to cleanse us of all of our sin. Thank you, Father, for what Jesus has done, not only on the cross, but his sharing of what he did in his walk with you, Father throughout his time on this earth. Help us to model out Christ as believers in the Lord, to do it so with more joy, to do it with more of your presence. Bless father our prayer time now that we would experience again your presence and the fullness of your joy. Help us to focus in on this tonight in Jesus precious name. Amen. Amen. All right.