

Intro: Cynthia Dewar. Founder & Artistic Director of SCCDT. SC Christian Dance Theater. "I loved dance. Dance was my life. In a way, I worshiped dance. It took the place of God in my life." For Cynthia, it was all about getting better. Dancing better. Getting the part. She idolized dance. When she was in high school she started to see that her values were out of balance. She turned to God through Jesus. She now sees dance as a way to worship and glorify God through her own dancing, but also by teaching others that they can still enjoy the art of dancing, and do something God-glorifying and worship with their body, what she calls sculpture in motion. Glorifying and giving thanks to Jesus through the beauty of dance. *Cynthia is just one example of how things we love, can become out of balance, and become an idol.*

*Today's Psalm wants to bring us back to remembering that there is only room for One God in our lives, and there's only One God who can satisfy and bring meaning to our life. **Jesus is that One True God.***

Thesis: "Because Jesus is the Truth God, We have many reasons to Rejoice"

A. Jesus is the LORD, and The LORD is the TRUE GOD.

B. He reigns! Over everything. Literally. All coastlands. All known world. *Mediterranean Sea.*

C. He's powerful and mighty. Nothing will stand in His way. Warning to those who don't believe.

D. All those who worship false idols, images and false gods will be put to shame.

E. But those who trust in Jesus through the Gospel, will rejoice and be glad, as we turn from evil and are declared righteous saints through the Good News of our deliverance/salvation.

F. Most don't have little statues/images in our spare bedroom. Maybe you do. So if you do, listen.

G. What are idols? *"Our hearts are idol factories. We keep producing one after another. Replacing"*

1. Anything that occupies/influences your mind/emotions in a controlling way. Time. Desires.

2. Anything if you didn't have, taken away, you would feel out of control, helpless or deep loss.

3. Anything that's not God/Jesus, demands attention/energy, but you can't stop. (*Addiction*).

4. *"anything that we come to rely on for some blessing, or help, or guidance in the place of a wholehearted reliance on the true and living God through Jesus Christ" - John Piper*

5. "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry." **Colossians 3:5**

H. Let me help you with a few. 1. Money (comfort) 2. Power (Control/Achievement/Respect) 3. Sex

ILLUSTRATIONS: Narcissus. Nemesis convinced him to look into a pool of water. He was so infatuated with his own reflection, he couldn't stop looking at himself. Wouldn't eat. Eventually he died of self-reflection and self-absorption and self-indulgence. We live in modern day, **Narcissistic Culture. Selfie Culture.** Where Instagram, Facebook & Tick-Tock encourage us to keep looking at ourselves all-day, everyday, look at your own image. Make yourself more beautiful, more acceptable, more likable, more shareable, more comparable. Has caused entire generation that is riddled w/ anxiety, dissatisfaction, insecurity, depression and has led to the highest suicide rates of any other generation. Looking at themselves all the time (comparing to others and their lives) is literally killing them. You become your god. - **Sinek: 2016 special on "Millennials in the Workplace."** **Dopamine. Smoke. Drink. Gamble. Highly, highly addictive.** *What Insta/Face culture teaches us is how to put filters on things and tell everyone "life is amazing even though I'm depressed!" Lonely? send 10 texts: "Hi. Hi. Hi. Hi." Wait for response. Or post a selfie: "It's one of those sleepy eyed, bad hair days and I don't even care." "Oh girl! You look amazing! Wish I looked like that when I first woke up in the morning!" "I'm so anxious!" "Praying!" "Not alone." What all this has done is removed us from real connection with real people, and God.*

- **Sinek: Giving pre-adolescent/adolescents a smart phone/social media, what we've essentially done is equivalent to walking over to the alcohol cabinet and saying, "hey kid, the next several years of your life are called 'puberty'.** Your body, emotions and hormones are going to change a lot. So is your way of thinking, problem solving, processing, socializing, etc. Key developmental stage, brain. So if it gets overwhelming or exhausting or confusing, help yourself. That's essentially what we've done to an entire generation. **Most Alcoholics discovered alcohol pre-teen/teenagers.** Parental Approval > Peer Approval. Stress. Porn, Drugs, Videos, TV, Video Games, Smoking, etc. Wired in their brain and body. So that every time you experience any level of stress you turn to that thing, coping mechanism and self-medication: Job stress, life stress, relationship stress, parent stress, social stress, etc. Turn to addiction.

- **Family Vacation.** Argue/Disobey/Whine/Miserable/Yell/Talkback/Sleepy. **"Family pic!" "Cookie! Ice Cream! Popsicle!** Just do a few edits, maybe this color adjustment, a little more tan, filter. Post to Facebook & Instagram. "Just love my family! Best week ever!" **Watchers:** Why can't my family vacations be more like that? They look so happy! Meanwhile that mom, at night after all the kids are finally asleep scrolls her phone, reads the responses, sees who all liked her photos: **"Beautiful family!" "Aaahhhh. I feel better. Everything's going to be ok. My life is good. It's all worth it."**
- **The Anxious Generation, social psychologist Jonathan Haidt. Epidemic of Mental Illness.**
- **His Suggestions?**
 - No smart phones before high school.
 - No social media before 16 years old.
 - No phones at school.
 - More independence, free play and responsibility in the real world.

APPLICATION:

1. **Phone Addiction.** Put your phone down. Can you put your phone away? For an hour? A Day? 3 days? Trade it out for a flip phone? Dumb phone? :-) When with a group, do you spend more time with your phone, or with them? Talking, looking, listening, etc. Holding, looking, scrolling, writing? Last thing you do while falling asleep? First thing you do when you wake up?
2. **Self-absorption.** Religious self-absorption. I'm gonna thinking about my obedience, goodness, lack of goodness, sin, repentance, ways to get better, holiness, godliness, etc. Thinking about myself.
3. **Impression/Image Management.** Feeling a need to control people's opinions of you. Facade.
4. **Kids.** Sports. Grades. Opportunity. Nobody can handle pressure of filling God's shoes, let alone child.

GOSPEL APPLICATION:

- **Solution/Answer to all of this:**
- Look to Jesus. Think about Jesus. Remember Jesus. Savior. Friend. Beauty of Gospel.
- **V9-12: When you love Jesus, you hate evil more.** Faith, working through love produces good fruit.
 - **We can rejoice!** Because we're now called **righteous. Delivered.** Rejoice!
 - **Light/Joy is sown!** Rejoice. Sowing. Planting. Taking root. You won't always see it, it might be dying out at times. But through faith in Jesus He has sown light & joy into your heart. It's in there!
 - **RAIN. Fertilizer. Life, growing again, green. Fruit. The roots were there, scorched for a while.**

CONCLUSION:

- **Culture/Instagram/Facebook teaches "you're not good enough."**
Gospel says: "You're more valuable to me than you will ever know."
REJOICE!
- **Culture/Instagram/Facebook teaches "you've got to earn and work for love and acceptance."**
Gospel says: "You're more loved than you will ever know."
REJOICE!
- **Culture/Instagram/Facebook teaches "You need more. Entitled. You deserve Better. ."**
Gospel says: "You have everything you need and more, and it's because of my grace."
REJOICE!
- **Culture/Instagram/Facebook teaches "you're ugly. You're worthless."**
Gospel says: "You're beautiful. And you're mine."
REJOICE!
- **Culture/Instagram/Facebook teaches "Impress. Prove yourself. Gain respect."**
Gospel says: "You're more accepted & secure than you'll ever known, and you belong here."
REJOICE!
- **Culture/Instagram/Facebook produces:** Anxiety, Depression, FOMO, Self-hatred/loathing, Fear, Discontent, Dissatisfaction, Insecurity, Loneliness, Disingenuous,
Gospel says: "In Christ, I'm loved, accepted, secure, perfect, righteous, adopted, belong, forgiven, value, worth, beauty, etc."

SO REJOICE!