

SERMON | JESUS BROUGHT JOY

SERIES | CHRISTMAS SEASON

STUDY GUIDE | RYAN ROMEO | SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023

SERMON SUMMARY

The world says the source of our joy is found in friends, family, money, work, vacations, health, status, etc., but they all let us down. All the sources of joy the world talks about boil down to other people meeting our needs and good circumstances. Both of which are a flimsy foundation for joy. What is the true source of our joy? Biblical joy is confidence, given by the Holy Spirit, enabled by the Gospel, that gives us protection, perspective, and passion.

Joy gives us protection. How can joy protect us? It keeps us from despair and from stress that can overtake us.

Joy gives us perspective. Joy must carry a prophetic understanding. Eschatology produces joy. Are things going to get worse in an eschatological sense? Yes. But will they also get much better? Yes! Joy is putting pain in its proper perspective. Pain is an awareness of the brokenness of the world around us and our weakness in the face of it. We can medicate our pain or use it as a reminder. Pain, through the context of the Gospel, is a means of rejoicing! Pain does not negate joy; it sits right next to it and reminds us of our joy.

Joy gives us passion. We find our purpose in finding the joy of the Lord. We walk in a new passion when we find the purpose of God. How do we receive this kind of joy? Drawing close to the true source of our joy, Jesus Christ. We cannot draw near to God without the Gospel of Jesus.

In Hebrews 12:2, what was the joy set before Jesus? The establishment of the new covenant (God with us), the satisfaction of justice, and the extension of grace. But why? Who was God getting at? Us! You and I were the joy set before Him, and through His sacrifice, Jesus made joy available to all people.

SCRIPTURE READING

READ THIS WEEK'S BIBLE PASSAGES: Neh. 8:10; Mat. 5:11-12; James 1:2-4; Mat. 13:44; Heb. 12:1-2 (ESV)

¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." – Nehemiah 8:10

¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. – Matthew 5:11-12

Testing of Your Faith

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. – James 1:2-4

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. – Matthew 13:44

Jesus, Founder and Perfecter of Our Faith

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. – Hebrews 12:1-2

BIBLE PASSAGE QUESTIONS

What stood out to you in these passages? Did the Lord highlight anything to you? What do we learn about the heart of God from these passages?

Read these passages again (use a different translation if helpful). How did these passages help to convict, correct, or encourage you?

GROUP DISCUSSION

DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS WITH YOUR GROUP

1. Is joy something that comes natural to you?
2. What is the joyful perspective you think Jesus is asking us to have?
3. How have you grown in understanding and/or experienced protection, perspective, and passion through the joy of the Lord?
4. Happiness is what happens to you; joy is what is produced in you. How do trials produce joy in our lives?

PRAYER

Take some time for prayer requests and pray over one another before wrapping up.

