

Happily Content with Jesus' Supremacy Over Your Life

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[0:00] there you go please take your Bibles and go to John's Gospel John's Gospel chapter 3 John's Gospel chapter 3 if you're visiting with us there's a Bible in the chair in front of you a black Bible you can pull that out and go to page to the back to renumber the New Testament find page 73 73 John chapter 3 we're gonna study verses 22 to 30 3 22 to 30 John 3 22 to 30 I'm gonna jump in and read and then we'll jump in and see what God has for us from his word this morning John 3 22 3 22 did I say that?

I said 3 22 right? okay sometimes I say things and I'm like wait did I say that? okay John 3 22 after these things Jesus and his disciples came into the countryside of Judea there he was spending time with them and baptizing and John also was baptized in Anon near Salem because there was much water there and they were coming and were being baptized for John had not yet been thrown into prison therefore a discussion came out of John's disciples with a Jew about purification they came to John and said to him Rabbi the one who is with you beyond the Jordan to whom you have testified look he is baptizing and all are coming to him John answered it said a man is not able to receive anything except that which has been given him from heaven you yourselves testify to me I said I myself am not the Christ but I've been sent before him verse 29 the one who has the bride is the bridegroom but the friend of the bridegroom the one who stands and hears him rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice and so this joy of mine has been made full it is necessary for him to increase but for me to decrease there's a story of a rich industrialist who was disturbed to find a fisherman sitting lazily beside his boat why aren't you out there fishing he asked because I've caught enough fish for today said the fisherman well why don't you catch more fish than you need the rich man asked what would I do with them you can earn more money came the impatient reply and buy better boats so you could go deeper and catch more fish you could purchase nylon nets catch even more fish and make more money soon you'd have a fleet of boats and be rich like me the fisherman asked then what would I do you could sit down and enjoy life said the industrialist as you look calmly out to the sea the fisherman replied what do you think

I'm doing now contentment it's like a four letter word in our society the four letter word that they don't say they'll say plenty of other four letter words contentment but it becomes like a four letter word contentment or being content it's something our culture does not understand because you watch TV we don't have TV so you get all the commercials right it's geared towards getting you to think you're not content until you have or or whatever you're not content until you have this we're bombarded with needing more we're bombarded with discontentment and then when we don't get what we want it's God's fault right yeah that attitude is infiltrated into the church my place in life some people who are not married my work

John's gospel is geared to readers to come and believe in Jesus believe into Jesus come receive Jesus come know Jesus and as we narrow things in to these specific verses 20 to 30 we'll see this happily content with Jesus supremacy over your life happily content with Jesus supremacy over your life Jesus is the one who defines your identity your role your purpose my identity my role my purpose our identity our role our purpose not just in human history but within the scope of redemptive history as I was doing my study one writer he put it like this and I was glad he said this the Christian life is not about

[6:39] God fitting into your story that's not the Christian life God fitting into me we've talked about this right the Christian life is about how do you fit into God's story into what he's doing it's about how do you fit into what God's doing he's doing something you fit in that how do you fit into that you gotta figure that out you don't come to the Bible saying okay what's in it for me that's how people

come to the Bible that's a wrong approach to the Bible no how do you fit in what God's already been doing into his story is he increasing is he being supreme the Christian life is being happily content with Jesus reigning supreme in my life in every circumstance that's a big pill to swallow do you like that

I don't like that this goes for our very lives and our service as his servants that we would joyfully submit ourselves to the service he's given us happily content with his supremacy over our lives so the focus is on Christ Jesus and why it should matter to you remember John's also about that John's telling you this is who Jesus is and this is why it should matter to you this is why it's important to you it should be important to you are you content with a lesser role that God may have for you in this life you want it to be there but you're here you wanted this to happen but that's happening you want this to take place but that's taking place are you content with that happily content with that all that you have has been given to you by

God Christian all that you have is grace nothing you have is from yourself who are you to question are you to be discontent with that once again we see another way Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament surpassed Judaism he far surpasses John the baptizer and any other right of purification because he's supreme so how does this begin verses 22 to 26 I titled it subtitled this way these few verses 22 to 26 I titled like this the temptation of discontentment the temptation of discontentment notice how things set itself up the historical narrative after these things that was spoken no real time frame is given

Jesus as disciples came into the rural areas of Judea they were already in Judea they went to the rural areas and Christ through his disciples was also baptizing people and it's through his disciples you find that out later in chapter 4 Jesus himself wasn't necessarily baptizing it was through his disciples so you see his ministry of baptism coincided with John again notice verse 23 and John also was baptized in Anon near Salem because there's much water there there were springs of water it was there in that desert part of the desert so people were coming to Jesus but people were also coming to John to be baptized by him yet more and more were going to Jesus now I mean why was Jesus baptizing what did his baptism signify John doesn't tell us this but it was a baptism from above a baptism that focused on Christ Jesus as Messiah in all reality he was doing true baptism not just in himself but also through John because John's baptism was a baptism of Jesus because it was pointing to Jesus and notice verse 24

John the evangelist tells us for John the baptist the baptizer had not yet been thrown into prison so Jesus had an earlier Judean ministry and the writer John the evangelist he wanted to make this clear before John the baptizer had been arrested and thrown into prison so what was happening there was a point to the point is to show one writer put it like this symbiotic relationship between the ministry of Jesus and the ministry of John there was a unity there wasn't a conflict and yet a conflict arose look at verse 25 therefore a discussion an argument really therefore an argument came out of John's disciples with a Jew about purification a specific right of Jewish purification but we're not told the specifics what it involved how did it relate to

[12 : 28] Jesus baptizing John baptizing there wasn't a point it's going to direct us to the true meaning and the source of purification how Jesus was supreme in this this is what it's going to direct us to but notice how what happens is this argument discussion argument really it came up about this whole baptizing you can look at verse 26 they came to John and said to him Rabbi the one who was with you beyond the Jordan to you testified look he's baptizing and all are coming to him as was said before apparently the conversation sparked an issue with Jesus baptizing we're not told how now John's disciples did understand that their teacher Rabbi testified to Jesus they got that but they did not understand why he was baptizing and notice more were going to Jesus than to John were they resentful maybe bitter maybe it's hard to tell but when they say all are coming to him well that is kind of an exaggeration not really everybody regardless they were trying to understand what was happening why was this happening should it be happening and there's the temptation and that temptation is directed right to

John temptation I shouldn't be here I should have this you God should give me that blah blah blah the temptation be discontent well all are going to him now less people are coming to you what's happening to your ministry it's fading away well so there's the temptation how will John respond to this how will you will you simply lack the trust well learn from John the Baptist John the Baptizer how to be happily content with Jesus supremacy over your life here's four ways how can you be happily content with Jesus supremacy over your life here's the first way number one all is

God's grace verse 27 John Antron said a man is not able to receive anything except that which has been given him from heaven John didn't just give him a straight answer he put it in a saying like a maxim or an adage but he's basically saying all human claims are given by God's sovereign hand we have no claim on anything it's like what Paul says to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians chapter 4 what do you have you haven't received it's it's all grace anything we have is a gift from God anything it all belongs to the Lord your health your wealth or lack thereof your house your kids no kids grandkids your job throw it in there your life your wife your husband all is

God's grace all gifts are from heaven or from God and that includes any kind of particular place within God's plan of salvation for that matter forgiveness reconciliation you're adopted it's all God given you want to know how you can be happily content realize everything you have is grace God John knew this was his calling by God's sovereignty within God's plan for redemptive history look to be discontent with God's wise sovereign purposes for people and things for you is to betray trust in Christ and faithfulness to him you betray that God you've got it all wrong I know better that's that's discontentment that's that's what discontentment means you're saying

God you've got it all wrong excuse me I know better I should have remember all that you have has been given to you by God Christian nothing you have is from yourself who are you to question that and to show discontent shouldn't we instead be thankful grateful happily content so the first way how you how we can be happily content with the supremacy of Jesus over our lives all is God's grace number two know your part or you can put remember your part verse 28 you yourself testified to me

[18:52] I said I myself am not the Christ but I've been sent before him I'm not Messiah man John made clear his identity his role his part I'm not the Messiah his part was to be sent before the Messiah he was the herald of Messiah and John was totally cool with that he was content with the part he had to play I'm good with that from the very beginning John knew his ministry would focus on another not himself that was his part to play so the statement it's almost like a rebuking of his disciples but notice he also demoted himself and promoted

Christ guys I'm simply a messenger of the message is what he's saying I testify to the Christ what about you do you remember your part that you play this is the part that God has given you in his story within human history within the scope of redemptive history this is what God has done don't forget that it's easy to do isn't it I know it is especially when you start comparing yourself with who other Christians God he's got she but he and they that's the temptation of discontentment right that's what you're tempted to do you're tempted towards that

John John is so cool with this he's like I'm good all this God's grace he knew his part remembered his part here's a third way know your position as well know your position verse 29 the one who has to brides the bridegroom duh of course but the friend of the bridegroom the one who stands and hears him rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice in parabolic fashion John explained even more how he viewed his identity and his position in comparison to Jesus he's the friend of the bridegroom I'm not the bridegroom the one who gets the bride is the bridegroom that's just obvious yeah not the friend the bride is for the groom not the friend that's his position the friend in Jewish weddings was a highly honored position he had a number of responsibilities like serving as a witness contributing financially being promoted in the festivities providing general oversight and management for the ceremony he's trying to lift up the bride and the groom he's trying to lift them up that was his that was his role that was his place that was his position the friend stands and hears the bridegroom and loves to hear from him he gets such joy in watching the ceremony take place and he'll make sure it all runs smoothly for that's my boy that's my boy yeah remember maybe when some of you have been married your best man he does that I remember Paul Nichols did that for me he said pointed to me and Chris it's great that was that was his role that was his position there's such great joy for the friend knowing and seeing the groom and his bride are united together and so happy together a good friend will see to it that all the focus is upon the groom and the bride that's his position in the wedding and make no mistake about it

John knew from Old Testament passages the passages that depicted God's people as the bride and Yahweh the Lord as the bridegroom John understood this was his place his place was to magnify praise point to and get excited about the groom don't get excited about me what are you getting excited about me for I'm nothing it's Jesus man right he should be supreme he should be exalted he should be magnified he should be honored he's the groom right all is God's grace know your part remember your part remember your position and then guess what be happy about it

because look at verse 29 and in verse 29 he says and so this joy of mine has been made full he was happy about it he's excited about it it's been filled up his joy has been filled up why because here it is he received such great satisfaction in knowing that his

[25:20] God given gift his God given role was being successful he got joy because Jesus is being supreme you get that he got joy because he was receiving he was receiving from the son of God think about it Jesus was getting the focus the attention the glory the honor for John not to be that joy happy about it it would be like a bride or even the bridegroom in a wedding being concerned that the best man wasn't getting enough attention at their wedding that the best man wasn't getting enough attention at the wedding that would be ridiculous right the bride is like oh like Chris would be like oh

Paul are you getting enough attention is everything okay you need to make sure you're getting all your pictures and this and that like what that doesn't make sense or I would say as the groom Paul to my best man are you make sure you're okay you're getting the focus maybe you should come up and do this and that we wouldn't do that it's ridiculous it's like kind of silly right would you do that at your wedding probably not it'd be ridiculous the focus is on the groom and his bride there's jealousy that can seep in with this discontentment I'll tell you a heart full of joy pushes out any jealousy we have towards others and any arrogance we have towards God it's joy the fullness of

God's promise had finally been made known and this brought John such great satisfaction so he was he was serving God and yet as he's serving God God was actually serving him because the best thing for him to do was to hear and as one writer put it quote respond to his own witness so he's the best thing he would do was to respond to his own witness he's responding to Jesus he's receiving he's getting joy as he's focusing on Jesus see Jesus is getting the focus and when Jesus gets the focus I get the joy when Jesus gets the focus in your life you get the joy because you're doing what you're made to do our joy and our self benefiting is actually found in Jesus the bridegroom and our service to the bride benefits the bride who's the bride his body the church God's people so here's the four ways all is God's grace all is his gift know your part remember your part know your position and be happy about it okay so summary so here's the deal verse 30 sum it up here's the deal it is necessary for him to increase but for me to decrease you don't see that but must the must is day in the Greek delta epsilon iota it must happen this way it has to this was the only way

God excuse me John was going to be content when he was doing what he was meant to do called to do sovereignly directed to do the only way he must decrease John and the old order that John represented Christ is the true purification Christ is the true temple Christ is the true birth Christ is the true bridegroom notice that walks us back all way back to chapter two purification birth the bridegroom the true temple that's who Jesus is and here's the other thing too John's joy was not found in conceding victory to his superior opponent through mumbling and grumbling okay

[30:46] God that's that's not that's not how John that's not how John responded okay you win whatever no he wholeheartedly embraced God's will for him and the identity part and position into which God placed him he wanted Jesus to reign supreme totally there's a lot we can learn here from John can't we from just these few verses and this is not just a simple universal summary of God's purpose for John in relation to Messiah but a universal summary for all messengers of God's message and the idea of decrease is this here's the idea of decrease which

I said this to you earlier he's the one who receives Jesus is the one who gives I receive Jesus gives I'm the receiver and when I receive I get joy I receive that Jesus would reign supreme in my whole life and in every circumstance into which he placed me goodness sickness from what I have to do even from what I have to what I don't have and maybe what I want to have my life needs to be focused on him not me we're mere recipients of what he offers he gives to us he reigns supreme in us I mean think about it no one else matters we commit ourselves unreservedly to

Jesus with full fidelity I get my life into his story easier said than done isn't it but that's how our very lives should be defined we are in service to the bride and the bridegroom who's the bride us which is what his body so we're serving the groom by serving the body because the body is the bride which is the body of Christ and that's Jesus see and we're in service to the bride and the bridegroom even as we're members of the bride ourselves so our joy I said this earlier our joy and self benefiting is found in our bridegroom and our service benefits his body his people

I'll put it in a different way and the person who did this put it in a way that's perfect I think God is most glorified in us when we're most satisfied with him like John Piper God is most glorified in us

when we are most satisfied with him and as we satisfy ourselves with him serving him we're in essence serving his people which is his body the church us because we're the body of Christ and that brings great joy you see the Christian life is being happily content with Jesus reign and supreme how do you be happily content with Jesus supremacy over your life it's all God's grace remember your part remember your position and you'll be happy about it it's easier said than done isn't it easier said than done may God's spirit give us grace to learn how to be content with our savior can we pray for that now oh father thank you we fall so short of this and yet you've shown us such amazing grace father by sending your son to die for us who rose from the dead we have grace we're given your grace and your compassion you've forgiven us you've loved us we are rebels and sinners and yet you've brought us close to yourself we have hearts of thanks and joy and yet thank you father that when we grumble and complain [36:30] Jesus you died for that too we had to be forgiven of that too so work in us as a people we may be so happily content with what you're doing day in and day out week in and week out work in us we pray by your spirit and I say to you if you're here and you have not allowed Jesus to reign supreme in your life may today be the day that you repent and trust in Jesus that you will humble yourself and say

God all I deserve is your judgment please show me mercy and forgive me I repent and I put my trust in you alone Jesus and God will save you do that even now as we take these next few moments to think and to ponder what we've seen from God's word do that now call upon him saying Jesus I repent I trust you I believe you died for my sin he'll save you he'll show you grace and so let this time these next few moments to let your mind be filled with the truth of God maybe it'll be a time of confession where you say Lord I've I've been discontent with my life I need your grace give me your grace to be happily content maybe this will be the time where you do that whatever the case may be use these few moments

I pray I ask to fill your mind with truth please do that now