

Joy

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Date: 06 October 2024

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[0:00] We'll do sort of two talks, part one and part two. And then after singing another song, we'll have time of questions and comments.

If there's anything that you want to say based on what we've looked at this evening, but also through the whole emotion series. We've looked at anger, anxiety, and grief.

And we start at the beginning thinking about the emotional life of Jesus. So we've covered a lot of ground. And there might be questions which are brewing or comments, things you found helpful in thinking, chewing over some of this stuff.

So it'd be great to be able to share them with one another. And we'll also try and spend some time praying, responding to God in prayer on these things as well.

So joy. We've been saying in our emotions series that where your treasure is, there your heart will be.

[1:03] Also, that's what Jesus says. And we've been saying that our emotions are like windows into our hearts. They show us what our hearts treasure.

And when it comes to joy, we can include, we can think about the things we rejoice in. We can think about maybe rejoicing in the lion.

Maybe it shows we treasure rest and sleep. Or maybe we rejoice in the flowers flowering. And so we treasure our gardens.

We treasure nature. And that's good God-given stuff, isn't it? Maybe we rejoice in the exam results. We treasure our learning.

Thinking about joy from a Christian biblical point of view, we see in the Bible that joy is sort of not really an optional thing in the Christian life.

[2:04] We should be encouraged that God is interested in our joy. He commands us to rejoice. Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit, one of the fruits of God's work in us.

So what is joy? Here's a definition from John Piper. Christian joy is a good feeling in the soul, produced by the Holy Spirit, as he causes us to see the beauty of Christ in the word and in the world.

Joy is a deep inner feeling in our hearts, produced by the Holy Spirit. But hearing this evening, for some of us hearing this evening, that joy is not optional, even though we're commanded to be joyful, that may not be what some of us want to hear right now.

That's not the place we're in. You get the grief and anxiety and anger.

You're thinking in your mind right now, Daniel, I could resonate with those things, but when it comes to joy right now, that feels far away from me.

[3:26] Well, the Bible gets real with us, actually, on this. We've seen already, over these last few weeks, how it deals with all the emotions we experience in our Christian walk, in our fallen world.

We see how emotions are a real God-given gift to us. We've seen how Jesus experiences them so fully and perfectly.

And if we're not feeling in a place of joy right now, we can be encouraged that the Bible deals with that. So think of King David.

He enters into the Bible as a young shepherd boy. He's anointed to be the king of God's people.

And things start off rather well on a high for David.

He goes and kills, slays the giant Goliath. He's the hero on that day.

[4:32] Everybody loves him. But then, as we saw when we were looking at 1 Samuel last year, not everybody did love him. Saul, particularly, was after him, wanted to kill him, wanted to get rid of him.

Once David does take the throne, once he does become king, there's a time of joy when the Ark of the Covenant arrives back into Jerusalem.

It's a cause of great celebration to the people, to David. But shortly after that, things turn a bit sour. David gets a bit cocky.

He chooses not to go to war. And as he lies on his roof one day, he catches a glimpse of a beautiful young woman bathing.

We know her name. It's Bathsheba. He looks once, and then he looks again. He wants her. And he gets her.

[5:36] But then she falls pregnant. And the baby must be his. Her husband, Uriah, is at war.

And so David tries to mend the situation. It gets very messy. He calls Uriah back. But David's plans fail. And so instead, he gets Uriah put on the front line in the war to make sure he dies.

So is everything good now? All sorted? Back to joy? Or no? David has sinned.

He slept with another man's wife. She's now having his baby, and he's murdered her husband in the process. The joy in his salvation has gone.

He's guilty of sin. And so God sends Nathan, the prophet, to tell him a story, which leads David to feeling convicted of his sin. And this then leads him to pen those words in Psalm 51.

[6:43] Be helpful to turn there. We'll read some of these words. Psalm 51. Psalm 51. Psalm 51. As we turn here, imagine having your deepest shame recorded for the rest of history in this book, for all of us to read today.

We wouldn't want our sins recorded, and nowadays it would be put up on YouTube for all the world to see. But the Bible is refreshingly real when it comes to sin and shame.

And Psalm 51 is a wonderful confession of sin that can help us when we're in those times of sin and shame.

It's a confession of David's deep and darkest sin. Have a look. Verse 1. David has sinned, and he is real here with God about that.

I have sinned. Blot out my transgressions. Wash away my iniquity. Cleanse me from my sin.

[8:31] And David says, it's really against the Lord that he has sinned. But my surprise is, maybe you think he should go to Bathsheba and find forgiveness from her, and go to Uriah.

Oh, hang on. Uriah's dead, isn't he? Verse 4. David says, against you, you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight.

And so he feels far away from God as he realizes, against you I have sinned. And it sapped the joy from him.

Verse 11 and 12. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.

sap the joy from him. And so he needs to say, as he's confessed his sin, restore to me the joy of salvation.

[9:38] When we have sins, when we feel the Lord is far away, when we don't feel the joy of salvation because of sin, how quickly it can go.

Just a quick click on the computer, one look at a person or an exchange of texts can suddenly lead us to feeling far away from God. Or the joy we experience with his people on a Sunday can suddenly lead to guilt and shame on Monday.

Sin drives a wedge between us and God. God who is the fountain of joy and pleasure. But if there's sin, that we're committing, we're sort of trying to enjoy that more than God.

And that's going to affect how we're feeling. Joy is found in God. And so we're falling a distance from God. That's how David felt here.

But God shows his grace to David. That we see in this psalm, there is more grace found in God than there is sin in David.

[11:00] There is more grace found in God than there is sin in you. We sometimes sing, our sins, they are many, but his mercy is more.

Now, Psalm 51 feels very and rightly sobering. Whereas Psalm 32, and we'll turn there, most scholars say that this was also written around the same time.

Psalm 32 just has a note of a lot more joy as David confesses his sin before God. He finds joy in his salvation.

Psalm 32. It starts on a joyful note, doesn't it? Verse 1, blessed or happy, blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. David is feeling the joy of forgiveness, and he's feeling his blessing.

[12:21] He's feeling joy again. That joy of salvation has been restored to him. And in this Psalm, he retells the story of his confession.

So verse 3 and 4, this is how we felt before he confessed. Verse 3, when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy on me. My strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

At first, he kept silent about his sin before God's.

No more joy. But then he confessed. Verse 5, then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.

And the Lord forgave me the guilt of my sin. The joy of salvation restored to him through his confession of his sin.

[13:24] sin. And the psalm ends in this wonderful, joyful way. Rejoice in the Lord and be glad you righteous. Sing all you who are upright in hearts.

Ends with a wonderful, joyful tone. And verse 10 and 11 are interesting sort of contrasts between the wicked and the righteous. Verse 10, many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in him.

Rejoice in the Lord and be glad you righteous. Sing all who are upright in heart. The wicked who do not know God's forgiveness of sin, they don't know what it is to rejoice in salvation, to rejoice in sins forgiven.

But how blessed are we who do know that. And so joy is experienced in the forgiveness of sins, coming back to the Lord.

But that might not be the only reason why we're not feeling particularly joyful. If you're not feeling joyful this morning, it might not, this evening, it might not be because of sin that needs confessing, it might be that you're going through some measure of suffering.

[14:48] We feel like we're suffering some sort of grief or trial. It's hard to find the joy. We're trying to look for it. Where is the joy to be found? There's a wonderful thing, a wonderful thing that doesn't quite make sense, but it's that when we are going through trials, we can still know the joy of the Lord.

When we are going through deep pain and suffering, we can still know joy. Joy in our God who saves us, in our God who's given us new birth into a living hope through our resurrected Savior. And so that even in the deepest and darkest griefs and pains of our life, we know something that may be hard to express, but something of joy as we remember our Savior, remember our salvation. For Jesus is still the treasure of our hearts. Even when everything else around us doesn't feel joyful, Jesus is ours, and we can know the joy of knowing Christ as ours.

It would be helpful to turn to James chapter 1 to help us to think about this a little bit more. James chapter 1. James chapter 1 from verse 2.

[16:42] Consider it pure joy when you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

Let perseverance finish its work in you so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds.

Not joy in the trial itself, not leaping up and down for joy that something has gone terribly wrong, but joy in knowing that God has a purpose in this, that God is working, that God is helping us to grow in perseverance.

perseverance. The testing of your faith produces perseverance, he says. And what are we persevering towards?

Where are we going as Christians? Well, verse 12 shows us blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

[18:07] as we persevere, that's where we're going. We're heading towards the crown of life, the crown of eternal life that our God is giving to us.

That's something to take joy in. And so even in the trial, verse 17 to 18, James says this, every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created. These verses are contrasting verses beforehand about being tempted.

But here, James wants to remind us that in God we have every good and perfect thing. He gives good gifts to his children.

He has given new birth to us. And that can't be taken away from us even in the trials and suffering of life.

[19:21] And so in those trials we can rejoice. peace. One more place to turn to before we do a couple of other different things.

2 Corinthians chapter 4. 2 Corinthians chapter 4. from verse 7.

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all surpassing power is from God and not from us.

We are hard pressed on every side but not crushed. Perplexed. But not in despair. Persecuted. But not abandoned. Struck down but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

[20:24] For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body so that then death is at work in us but life is at work in ye.

Paul has been these things that he mentions he's been hard pressed on every side he's been perplexed he's been persecuted he's been struck down but he's still going they've not let him down he's still joyful he still knows the life of Jesus at work in him.

he goes on to say this in verse 16 therefore we do not lose heart though outwardly we're wasting away yet inwardly we're being renewed day by day for our light our momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal weight of glory that far outweighs them all so we fix our eyes not on what is seen but what is unseen so since what is seen is temporary but what is unseen is eternal there are so many things that may cause us to feel trouble and suffering in this life various trials that we will go through but know this inwardly we are being renewed day by day God is at work in us and these light and momentary troubles which they are compared with the joy of eternity are achieving that eternal glory that far outweighs them all and just just over the page in 2

Corinthians 6 verse 10 Paul says been sorrowful yet always rejoicing we sense that in what we've already read but that confirms it he knows joy in suffering before we sing something I just want to show you this little video clip from Joni Erickson Tarder an American Christian who's gone through and is going through real deep pain and she talks really helpfully about the joy that she knows in that so hopefully this will work I have an alternative way to play let's go this way hi I'm Joni Erickson Tarder and after nearly 55 years in a wheelchair this is why you test these things before the service begins here we go can you see that yeah great hi I'm Joni Erickson Tarder and after nearly 55 years in a wheelchair there is one Bible verse that really describes me 2nd Corinthians chapter 6 verse 10 sorrowful yet always rejoicing!

[24:17] That's right even in my most happy moments believe me there is always an accompanying sorrow part of my inside sadness is related to my constant pain the other part is more sweet and even joyful given the way that that same pain has stretched my soul's capacity for Jesus it's the way Christians who suffer live come admit it even in your most glad moments the mingling of sorrow never goes away and to be honest I would never wish it away because that coexistence of sorrow and joy is one of the best ways I can describe my nearness to Jesus being sorrowful yet always rejoicing is for me a it's a kind of litmus test telling me this joy that you are experiencing Johnny it's not frivolous it's not

superficial so be grateful be glad in that and I am to be sorrowful yet always rejoicing makes your faith and mind wonderfully conspicuous to others it shows others that yours is not a surface joy it is a joy very much like the joy of your suffering savior the plan for this second half of the talk is to turn to psalm 16 and to give a very sort of short sermon on it really because it's a psalm that is full of joy and

I think it's a really helpful psalm to turn to when thinking of joy it is full of it as hopefully we'll see so psalm 16 a mictam of David keep me safe my gods for in you I take refuge I say to the Lord you are my lords apart from you I have no good thing I say of the holy people who are in the lands they are the noble ones in whom is all my delights those who run after other gods will suffer more and more I will not pour out libations of blood to such gods or take up their names on my lips

Lord you alone are my portion and my cup you make my lot secure the boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places surely I have a delightful inheritance!

I will praise the Lord who counsels me even at night my heart instructs! I keep my eyes always on the Lord with him at my right hand and I shall not be shaken therefore my heart is glad and my tongue!

rejoices my body also will rest secure because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead nor will you let your faithful ones see decay you make known to me the path of life you will fill me with joy in your presence with eternal pleasures at your right hands going to see a few things from this psalm firstly David's refuge David begins the psalm keep me safe my God for in you I take refuge he knows that he can rest secure in the safety and help of his God as he walks through life in this world in verse 2 he carries on and he says of the Lord who he trusts!

[28:30] his refuge he says you are my Lord apart from you I have no good thing you are mine my refuge if I don't have you then how can I have any good thing how can I have joy!

after all verse 11 says you make known to me the path of life you will fill me with joy in your presence with eternal pleasures at your right hands God fills his people with life and joy and eternal pleasures and I think we can say of God he is the source of eternal joy and blessing and so David is right when he says in verse 2 apart from you I have no good thing because all good things come from you as we read in James every good and perfect gift comes from him other people in our life they are a blessing from the

Lord because they come from God our creator the blessing of daily food and water is provided for us by our gods David in finding his life in God sees that he is the source of all good things and look at who he has provided for David verse 3 I say of the holy people who are in the land they are the noble ones in whom is all my delight David as he finds his life in God finds a delight in the people of God he's not saying here he finds more delight in God's people than in God but he is saying that as fellow people who delight in God he finds a real unity and something deep and in common with them he is delighted that they too share their delight in

God and I wonder if we can sense that are we glad to come together with the people of God God do we look forward to being together sharing life with God's people being together like this on a Sunday because on the opposite side to that David speaks of those who are not the Lord's people verse four those who run after other gods will suffer more and more I will not pour out libations of blood to such gods or take up their names on my lips speaks of those that are running after other gods not that he doesn't delight in seeing them but they are on a different course to David they are running after false gods false delights false joys false gods only take from us see what

David says I will not pour out libations of blood to such gods from certain pagan rituals rituals in following false gods they can literally take your blood from you and any sort of false god that the world may run after today they can sap the joy from us they can demand from us but don't give much to us they only give false hopes and false delights false joy that doesn't really stay because only God Yahweh is the source of all good things to give to his people God and God does demand blood but he's been gracious in offering his people in the Old Testament a way for them to sacrifice blood of animals in the place of our blood so that his people can enjoy forgiveness and as we know from the

[33:22] New Testament he's offered his own body and blood for us in our place so that our hope is built not on ourselves but on Christ and his blood and righteousness he's the source of all good things even our

salvation and our saviour he's not demanding but is gracious and gives to us secondly David's inheritance a few weeks ago I made a crumble that was intending just to feed Becky and I for one night but it served about eight people my eyes are bigger than my stomach probably and I served about half of it into one bowl and Becky was like that's so much what are you doing when we think of portions we think in terms of serving food don't we I don't have the gift of portioning food up wisely but when we read of portion in the

Bible we're to think actually of lands so God portioned up bits of the promised land to the twelve tribes of Israel and David here he talks about the Lord being his portion verse five Lord you alone are my portion and my cup you make my lot secure he sees that God is his portion if we were given a choice of portions and delights out in front of us would we choose God would we choose him to be our portion our delight or he talks about him being my cup think of a cup running over with the choicest of wines think of all the blessings poured out from the

Lord he is our cup he is our portion and then he talks about him being my lot well no he talks about God making my lot secure how God guides us through life think about people who cast lots to decide things well God grants us our lots in life he guides us to different places and situations him we sang last week whatever my lot you have taught me to say it is well with my soul we can find a joy and peace knowing that God rules over the lot of our life David believes what God has given to him is so good that he will praise the Lord verse six the boundary lines have fallen to me in pleasant places surely I have a delightful inheritance!

We know that David is a man who has gone through deep trials who has been forsaken by his family at times who was on the run from his best mate's dad and father in law and yet David could say that in verse six the boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places surely I have a delightful inheritance who remembers what the Lord has given him what is his in his God who is the source of all good all joy God God who is his portion also offers David wise counsel in Psalm 119 David writes your statutes are my delight they are my counselors God has given David his words and of course we know in

Isaiah that the Lord Jesus is even described as a wonderful counselor and so we can find joy ourselves in knowing the wise counsel of the Lord in his word and in our Savior guiding us through the lots of life equipping us to live for him and so because the Lord is his inheritance His portion! [38:09] His wise counsel! David's going to fix his eyes on him! Verse 8 I keep my eyes always on the Lord with him at my right hand I will not be shaken!

And how we need to preach that to ourselves I will keep my eyes always on the Lord I often find myself singing turn your eyes upon Jesus that we've sung goes very easily round my head need to do that need to pray that need to keep our eyes trust in the Lord who is the fountain of goodness of joy of delight if you are with me then I will not be shaken the way he started in verse one saying keep me safe my God for in you I take refuge verse eight he declares he really is safe with him at my right hand I shall not be shaken God is for me who can be against me and finally David's joy verse nine therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices my body also will rest secure because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead nor will you let your faithful one see decay you will make known to me the path of life you will fill me with joy in your presence with eternal pleasures at your right hand he rejoices he rejoices because of what he already said how

God has blessed him with such good things but he also rejoices with what is ahead the eternal things his eternal security but of course these words are true for David in verse 10 but they're even more true for the one who was coming after him he was looking forward to the king who would sit on his throne forever the king that he finds his life and salvation in and acts 2 24 to 34 show us this very clearly and it's not going to surprise you who this is acts chapter 2 24 Peter in his great sermon says but

God raised him from the dead freeing him from the agony of death because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him David said about him and you'll recognize these words I saw the Lord always before me because he is on my right hand I will not be shaken therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices my body also will rest in hope because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead you will not let your holy one see decay you have made known to me the path of life you will fill me with joy in your presence words from that psalm and then Peter goes on and says

fellow Israelites I tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried and his tomb is here to this day but he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne seeing what was to come the Messiah that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead nor did his body see decay God has raised this Jesus to life and we are witnesses of it how wonderful that David in writing those words writing with such great confidence of the eternal security that he has was really writing of the Lord Jesus whose body really didn't see decay he was risen again from the dead this brings David joy even though he did not see Jesus he believed he was to come he believed he would not die but live forever and this is news he can rejoice in and it's news we can rejoice in he asked God to keep him safe he trust that the Lord is by his side and he will not be shaken and this safety in

[43:00] God is even known in death that's news we can rejoice in too that though we face the struggles and hardships of life in Jesus we know life forever we know that the glory to come far outweighs all what will feel like light and momentary troubles compared to our eternal glory that we're going to share with our Lord because of our risen conquering saviour and so David says you will make known to me the path of life you will fill me with joy in your presence with eternal pleasures at your right hands here's a quote I can't remember who it's from someone from a long time ago I think for who would not call God happy who is in need of nothing finds all comfort in himself and possesses all things is free from all evil and filled with all good joy and joy and joy and happy in and of himself and if our life is found in him then in him we find pleasures which are eternal we find in him the fount of joy eternal he has made his path of life known to us in his son and we find life in

Jesus we find the one who fills us with perfect joy and pleasure and so where your treasure is there your heart will be also is our treasure found in our God is our life found in Jesus is our joy found in living for him being obedient to him finding his mercy for when we have failed him are we treasuring God final word not from me but from someone far wiser John Piper God will bring you body and soul this is a sort of summary that John Piper has of this psalm God will bring you body and soul through life and death to full and everlasting joy and pleasure if he is your safest refuge and your supreme treasure and your sovereign

Lord and trusted counselor through Jesus Christ the risen King of Kings we're going to stop there we're going to sing something and then an opportunity to bring questions comments and a little time of prayer as well a Thank you.