

Abiding Life that Leads to Joy

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[0 : 00] Great time of worship this morning. Thank you, praise team.

I want to encourage you to come back tonight. We'll have more of an opportunity to worship the Lord as we celebrate and remember the Lord's table through communion.

So I want to encourage you to be part of that service as well. And just an extension, really, of what we're going to be talking about this morning as we launch into a new series.

A series through the book of 1 John. A letter that was written by the beloved apostle. And as I was trying to think, what do we do next after our study in the book of Isaiah?

Where do we go? And why do we go there? And it really stems from the initiative that we have this year that comes from Isaiah chapter 30, verse 15.

[1 : 07] And if you remember what that passage says, it says, Is that your experience today?

Is that where you are? Experiencing the perpetual salvation and deliverance of God in your life?

Coming to enjoy and revel in the strength of God day by day? Or are you a little like me?

There is weakness. There is inadequacy. There is struggle. There is failure and brokenness.

I come to this series and I feel tremendously inadequate. I know the significance of dwelling in God.

[2 : 27] I know the importance of abiding in Him. But I sure don't know what that looks like. At least I haven't... I'm on a journey, okay?

I haven't really arrived when it comes to being a person who abides in God and enjoys the presence of God in my life to the degree where I know and have experienced His salvation moment by moment.

And so I kind of feel like I need to pull up a stool. I need to sit down. And we just need to kind of have this open discussion through this book because I can't come to you this morning as an expert who has arrived at this lesson.

But if we're going to really know and enjoy the salvation and the strength of God, we're going to be people who are living and dwelling and abiding and resting in Him.

Not striving. I think I'm more like my namesake, like Peter. You know, impulsive. Kind of acts before he thinks.

[3 : 43] That's my nature. Well, this morning we're going to sit at the feet. And from now until the end of August, we're going to sit at the feet of somebody who I think did get it.

We're going to sit at the feet of the Apostle John, the beloved Apostle. Because I really believe that John understood this subject and got it to such a point that Jesus referred to him how?

Remember what Jesus called him? He was the one who Jesus loved, right? Now, have you ever thought about that statement? The Apostle that Jesus loved?

Was it that Jesus didn't love Peter and James and Andrew and the others? No, it wasn't that Jesus didn't love them with the same affection and the same love.

But I think it is really this concept that we're going to talk about from now until the end of August. John just pushed in to Christ.

[4 : 50] John understood what it meant to just soak in this experience of God. John knew what it meant to just enjoy him.

You see, I think for many of us who lift up the wonder of the Scripture and would hold to the inerrancy and the authority of the Scripture, and we come here on a Sunday morning, we want to listen to the Word of God taught, we're on our podcast and we're listening to sermons throughout the week, we're faithful to study the Scriptures day by day, we understand that the value of the Word almost to a fault because it becomes academic.

It becomes sterile. It becomes an exercise of just checking the box, doing what you know is expected, but it doesn't really sink in.

You ever been there? You ever felt that way? John was the apostle that Jesus loved because John was the one who soaked Jesus in the most, I think.

He was the one who really tasted of the wonder of Christ, just reveled in this experience of knowing Him. He is to be known through His Word, don't get me wrong.

[6 : 20] That is an essential part of the Christian life, but it can't stop there. That's where it ended for the Pharisees. They knew the Scriptures forwards and backwards, but when it came to actually experiencing God, they had no experience of Him.

That's what the psalmist says. He says, Taste and see that the Lord is good. You experience God day by day? Or are there...

Would you describe your time in the Word and your time in prayer as kind of mechanical? You're in good company, if that's how you would describe your time.

Sometimes you ever feel like a hypocrite because you know it's what God expects you to do, but you just... There's just... God seems so distant.

You seem so separated from Him. There's not that fellowshiping that the Bible promises happening in your life. Well, as we walk through this study of 1 John, that's my desire for you.

[7 : 35] That's my desire for me. My desire for us is that we would really come to understand and live in the reality of what Isaiah promises 700 years even before Christ comes.

That true salvation and strength will come as we... as we're quiet. It comes as we rest. It comes as we... as we dwell in Him, not as we strive.

It comes through a fellowshiping, experiential relationship with God. That's what I want for me. That's what I want for you.

And by the way, as we're going to look at this morning in 1 John 1, that is what the apostle, beloved apostle John, as kind of the expert on the subject, he wants for the church that he's writing to.

And so, as we go on this journey, it's really a journey of learning how to enjoy God. To enjoy Him more than just an exercise of academia or scholarship, but to really know Him.

[8 : 49] To know Him in such a way that it changes your life and it changes the lives of the people around you. It's noticeable. It's...

It's dramatic. It's obvious to anyone who observes you that there's something significant that's taken place in your life. It shows up in the way you live.

So turn with me, if you would, to 1 John 1. As we begin this study. 1 John 1. It's at the end of your Bibles.

And if you're visiting with us, it's on page 1,021. 1,021. Let me just open up our time with a word of prayer. Lord, You know our brokenness.

You know the inadequacies of our lives. You know the things that step in the way that hinder and obstruct relationship with you. There is no hiding from you.

[9 : 58] We are exposed before you. The darkness of our hearts is evident to you even though we keep it concealed to those around us.

And yet, there is promise of light and life. There is promise of fellowship and overcoming those obstacles, those hindrances that stand in the way.

God, please help our rebel hearts today. Please forgive us for those things even this week that we have done that have displeased you. Draw us into your presence even now.

Cleanse us and make us new and help us to be focused. Remove the distractions and help us to see what you intend for each of us in this time in your word today.

God, we have so much hope to offer. Help us to be people who embrace the life-giving and hope-giving message of Christ.

[11 : 05] May it flow from our lives into our families and into our workplaces and into our communities. Lord, may it be so evident in us that it is life-changing for us and life-changing for the world around us.

We ask that you would do your work. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. 1 John 1. This very first opening phrase.

That which was from the beginning. that which was from the beginning. Now, for those of you who have been here at Maranatha for the last several years, that should be a familiar phrase to you.

For maybe some of you, you're saying, who are we talking about and what beginning are we referring to? Well, in order to know what beginning we're talking about, we need to understand the context of this verse and we need to understand who is writing it and what is the point of what is about to be said.

I want us just to kind of take a brief look at the introduction and just to help us get into the flow of this study. I want us to look at the author and the author is the Apostle John.

[12 : 29] We've talked about him a little bit already. The beloved Apostle John who experienced Christ personally. We're going to look at that in the next few verses but it just explodes with this experience of God.

The Apostle John just can't contain himself with enthusiasm. You can almost see him saying, hey, I've got a message for you. The most important person on the planet has come here and he's made himself known.

I've just got to let you know about it. John was the beloved Apostle who got to see and experience Christ personally. He got to hear the message before the cross in the upper room.

And really as we begin to look at this study, this letter in this first John, I want us to, I'm just, it's amazing to me to see how much of this letter mimics the message of Jesus on the night before he was betrayed and crucified.

In many ways, this is John's message, his sermon as it were, to the people of Ephesus about what happens that night.

[13 : 51] That private discussion of Jesus and his disciples from John chapter 13, 14, 15, and 16. The culmination of that, the concentration of that message begins to work its way out throughout this book, this little letter of 1 John.

So if you've ever wanted to have a sermon from Jesus or a sermon from the apostles on John chapter 15, here it is. Now it's much later in John's life.

John is older in age. We can kind of see that as we work our way through this book. We see constant references to the people in this church as little children helping us to appreciate that John is in the later stages of his life.

We're going to see that the apostle John is a dear friend of Jesus. We know that's to be true and this expression of his heart comes through in the message of this little letter.

John had discovered the secret of abiding and we're going to learn from his experience and we're going to see that the abiding life relates to so many different aspects of our own life.

[15 : 09] There are so many things that we can talk about in this little letter and I'll talk about the themes in just a moment but as we work our way through I want us to focus in on and to hone in on this specific topic.

topic of abiding in Christ. How does it play out in our life? What does it lead to in life? Well, John is probably, like I said, in the later parts of his life, maybe in his 70s or 80s and now he is writing to this church.

And as tradition tells us, he found his way to Ephesus and he had spent about 20 to 25 years ministering to that specific church. So the author's name is John and the church is the church of Ephesus.

Now we have a letter that Paul wrote to Ephesus so we know a little about this church. We've read about how that church got started in the book of Acts.

It was a church that was really a theological center in the ancient world. Paul founded that church on his third missionary journey. And when he first arrived, if you remember in Acts chapter 19, Paul shows up and he encounters some disciples and he asks them if they'd ever been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

[16 : 32] And their response is, we've never even heard about the Holy Spirit. Who is this? They had come to know the message about Christ through John the Baptist but they didn't know the continuing story, the work of God in their lives.

And so Paul reveals that to them and he baptizes them and this church just explodes with the gospel. We also find in Acts chapter 19 that it was a church that had been steeped in spirituality.

Not the kind of spirituality you would hope for. Witchcraft and sorcery kind of dominated the life of this church so that the collection of them came together and they burned their books of witchcraft and there was 50,000 pieces of silver worth of books that they burned that day.

Just to say we're done with that old way of life and we want to make Christ the focus and center of who we are. Well Paul was there and he taught for three consecutive weeks in the synagogue but it was met with mixed reviews.

And as a result of his ministry there he transitions his ministry now to speak in what was called the Hall of Tyrannus. He does that every single day for two years.

[17 : 55] This church just soaking in doctrine and theology and sitting at the great apostle Paul's feet and learning from him all that Paul would be able to share about the richness of who God was and the intricacies of how God worked.

This really was a church that had experienced kind of the super powers of theology and teaching. Not only had Apollos been there that gifted man with the ability to communicate the word of God and Apollos was working together with Aquila and Priscilla.

But then the apostle Paul comes and then Paul sends Timothy a little later on and then the beloved apostle John spends years of time ministering to these people.

If anyone understood doctrine it would be the church of Ephesus. They had the best of the best who were teaching them the things of God.

John, when John writes later about this church, the church of Ephesus, in Revelations chapter 2, he points to the accuracy and integrity of their doctrine when he says, I know your works, your toil, and your patient endurance, how you cannot bear with those who are evil but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not and found them to be false.

[19 : 24] I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake and you have not grown weary. It's a church that knew the truth, that was able to discern between truth and error and had devoted themselves whatever the cost to embrace and love the things of God.

God. But if the church of Ephesus had any downside, any drawback, it was the significance of an affection for knowledge that overshadowed a love for God.

John goes on in this passage and says, I have this against you, church of Ephesus, that you have abandoned the love that you had at first.

first. That is often the danger of those who lift up the scripture. As we allow the truth, the knowledge that we have in the Bible to puff us up and actually to disqualify us from being a partaker in the things of God.

We transfer a love for the word and the love for the word replaces a love for God. And a love for God is what really matters.

[20 : 45] And John is seeking to appeal to this church about the significance of love. And of all of the letters that the apostle Paul wrote, the one that stands out as being most dominated by the subject of love is actually the letter of Ephesians.

Ephesians. Even very early on the apostle Paul understood what was happening in this church. A church that had such an affection for the word but had actually lost their affection for Christ.

And that's the danger. Where are you this morning? Are we a church that loves God and does that love show up in a relationship with him?

That's what John is encouraging this church of Ephesus. Well there are a number of themes and if we were to talk about love we would be faithful to the text.

Forty-six times in the book, this little letter of 1 John, we find the subject of love. And out of 106 verses, that's almost one occurrence for every two verses we find love.

[21 : 58] Love is the dominant theme in this letter. But one of the close seconds is this concept, this theme of abiding. Abiding that John is seeking to help this church come to terms with.

What will abiding do? How will it show up? And as you read through chapter 2, 3, and 4, every paragraph in this letter has the word abide in it.

He begins with chapter 1 that deals with the introductory fellowship that we need to have with God and then from chapters 2, 3, and 4 he moves on to what does an abiding relationship with God look like and what does an abiding relationship do for you?

the key was not in striving. The key to accomplishing the objectives of God in life was abiding and resting in him.

In John's mind, it is the basis of everything good in the Christian life. Only when we abide can we live. John had discovered the key.

[23 : 13] and there was something that must be coupled with an intellectual knowledge of him but also an experiential knowledge of God. And where we're going to go this morning is I want us to see that an abiding relationship with God leads to joy.

As we look at the abiding life this morning, I want us to understand that it will lead you to joy. let me just read this first four verses for you and I'll show you that's kind of the end point of where we're getting to in our message this morning.

Here's what it says in 1 John 1 beginning at verse 1. that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and have touched with our hands concerning the word of life.

The life was manifest and we have seen it and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and is made manifest to us.

That which we have seen and heard we proclaim to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

[24 : 30] And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. That's where we're going this morning.

You want joy in your life today? Would you describe yourself as a person of joy? Would you say, yes, I exist in a spirit of joy perpetually?

If you are there, maybe you should be up here sharing with us how to make that happen. But the Apostle John has the secret.

He wants us to understand at front and center where joy comes from. joy is from God. You cannot have joy any other way.

Joy comes from him. If you want to experience joy today, you have to know God. And John wants that for you. I want that for you.

[25 : 37] I want you to experience joy. You can have it. It is accessible. accessible. But it's only accessible through you. And that's why John begins with the most important part of the story.

The most important ingredient in finding joy is to know who God is. He begins with that right here at the beginning. That which was from the beginning.

Make no mistake, John says, everything that will follow will come because of the one from the beginning. Well, who is this one from the beginning?

Well, if you look back to the gospel of John, that's where he starts his gospel as well. He says in John chapter one, in the beginning was the word.

The word was with God and the word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made.

[26 : 45] In him was life and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. And throughout the rest of the gospel of John, the beloved apostle introduces us and describes for us this amazing individual, Emmanuel, God with us, Jesus Christ, who came to earth.

And one of the things he came to bring was fellowship with God as we'll see in a moment but also joy. Joy that can only be experienced in him and through him.

If you want joy today, you have to know Jesus Christ. Joy comes from God. We find some things about this joy. First we find that it is an eternal joy.

It is an eternal joy. That's the point I believe that John is trying to get at here in this opening phrase. That which was from the beginning.

Because joy comes from God and because God is eternal, joy can be eternal. It is not temporary. Now, I think here at the outset of this message, I think we need to understand what is joy?

[28 : 02] What are we talking about when we're talking about joy? joy? And I think it may be helpful for us to understand what joy is not so that we can begin to understand what joy is.

First, joy is not temporary. Joy is eternal. Joy is not based upon circumstances. It's not based upon your walk of life.

It's not based upon the situation in which you find yourself. Joy is enduring. Joy is transcendent. Joy should occupy the life of every believer day by day, moment by moment.

Joy is also not the same as happiness. Happiness comes and goes. Happiness is based upon certain situations.

It's based upon life events. It's based upon what we get, based upon what we expect. Happiness can be quite fleeting, can't it? Joy is enduring.

[29 : 07] God wants us to experience joy. And he talks about the way to get joy. Jesus kind of gives this commentary to his disciples.

It's amazing to me to understand or to see in the scriptures, in the gospel of John, Jesus is the one to talk about joy all of the eight times in which it's mentioned through the gospel of John.

Every time that joy is referred to, Jesus is the initiator and the speaker of joy. And seven of those eight occurrences happen the night before Jesus was going to be killed.

Jesus tells his disciples in John chapter 15 verse 11, he says, things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

Where does joy come from? It's my joy, Jesus says, but it's my joy that you can experience. Spoken the night before Jesus would be killed.

[30 : 23] Joy that is enduring, joy that can come at any moment, any crisis, any situation that you're experiencing. Joy can overcome those things.

In John chapter 16 verse 20, Jesus says, most assuredly you will weep and lament, you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned to joy. John chapter 16 verse 24, until now you have asked nothing in my name, ask and you will receive that your joy may be full.

God wants you to experience joy today. That joy can only be experienced from him because he is the source of joy and he can allow you to experience enduring an eternal joy with him.

Will you know joy today? And maybe not surprisingly on the night that Jesus was betrayed and looking into the face of darkness what will come on the very next day what spurred him on to move through the cross?

We find in Hebrews chapter 12 it said look to Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross.

[31 : 54] Joy compelled Jesus to move through the most difficult and darkest hour of his existence.

Abiding life leads to eternal joy but it also leads to present joy. I want you to see that as our second point this morning. There is the expectation of eternal joy but there is also the experience of present joy.

We see that in verse 1 and 2 as well. It says here in the second part of verse 1 it says that which was from the beginning which we have heard which we have seen with our eyes which we have looked upon and have touched with our hands concerning the word of life.

What is John's point with this? John's point is to help us understand that joy is accessible and joy is present. He wants his readers to know that they can access joy because Jesus has showed up on this earth so that we could experience him.

We could experience life with him. We could experience the presence of him and that we could know joy through him. Notice these words.

[33 : 23] We heard him. We saw him. We looked on him. We touched him. In every way we experienced him. He made himself accessible.

He was from the beginning. We heard his message on the mountain side. We heard him teach in the temple. He dealt with us in private and he spoke to us and preached to us along the way.

In every context Jesus was speaking words of truth and we heard him. But we didn't just hear him. We saw him.

We saw what he did. The miracles that only God could perform. Casting out demons and healing the multitudes and calming the storm.

We saw it. We were there. We looked upon him and our hands touched him. Yes, he washed our feet and we did some fishing together.

[34 : 30] We sat around the campfire. We took long walks together. We embraced in times of sorrow. I touched him. He's real.

He came. All to emphasize that this God who seemed so distant in the Old Testament is now present in every way. Present and accessible.

He desires to be known and experienced and enjoyed. He came to show that we could know him intellectually of course but also we could know him relationally and personally through fellowship with him.

You can almost get the sense of John's words in how he repeats himself again in verse 2. He says the life was manifest and we have seen it and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the father and was made manifest to us.

Any of you who have kids you know that as the story comes and as there is excitement about what's taking place there's this repetition that is happening this enthusiasm that continues to spill out in every way.

[35 : 42] This is kind of what we're getting from John right here. There is this overflowing enthusiasm. Can you believe it? God showed up.

He was here. Can you get over the fact that I saw him and I touched him and I listened to his message? All because God wanted to make himself present for us.

Not just a future joy not something to expect sometime down the road but something I can have now something I can enjoy in this moment.

It is a present joy. That's why God came. So we could know the kind of joy that transcends the difficulties of this life. It was a joy that could be experienced through him.

Joy was given by God. It comes from God. But we find in verses 3 and 4 that joy is offered to us.

[36 : 47] Joy is offered to us. We find in verse 3 that some of the qualities of this joy that's offered to us. First we find that it is a shared joy.

It is a shared joy. Verse 3 says this, that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you so that you too may have fellowship with us.

And indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. You see that first phrase? That fellowship is with us.

It is a shared joy. And those who experience life with Christ will participate in fellowship with God's people.

You know, one of the first things that goes in my life, one of the first things that I shun in life when I'm feeling depressed or discouraged or I know that there's sin in my life, the first thing that goes is I don't want anything to do with God's people.

[37 : 57] You find that to be true in your life too? I really don't want to be around people. I kind of like being by myself. I just want to check in and check out of the various duties that I'm a part of.

But the last thing I want is to mix up with God's people. by the way, when I do have to be there because I feel like I got to perform some sort of duty, there's not going to be any transparency in my life.

There's really not going to be any fellowshiping. I'm going to be present there, but there's not going to be any stirring one another up to love and good deeds because I don't want them to know what's going on inside.

If we're going to be fellowshiping people, we have to let one another know that there! is brokenness! inside. I got a confession to make.

I'm broken. Okay? Now, most of you already know that. Of course. We know that you're broken. We see it every day.

[39 : 10] But being transparent is risky, isn't it? There's a bit of shame and embarrassment at times with letting people understand and recognize that there are failures going on.

But if we want to experience God's joy, we cannot know God's joy without fellowship. And we cannot have true fellowship and true community without honesty, without transparency, without being vulnerable with one another.

I'm sure you've heard along with me a number of people say, well, I'm a Christian, but I can be a Christian on my own. Well, that might be true, but you're not going to experience the joy of God that comes along with corporate community unless you're fellowshiping with God's people.

If you're feeling depressed and discouraged and you find that that is kind of the walk of your life, can I just encourage you to share that with the people of this church so we can bear those burdens together, we can love you through that and we can fellowship with you and then we can accelerate this process of moving to joy.

If you want to know joy this morning, we need to be fellowshiping people. John understood that characteristic and he appeals to this church, this church of Ephesus.

[40 : 47] He was so faithful and regimented in their doctrine and so committed to what was true that they lost a connection with one another. Sometimes our own knowledge of the standard keeps us from letting people know the real person behind the mask.

Be transparent. It's a shared joy. joy. We also see in verse three it is a heavenly joy. It's a heavenly joy. Here's what it says.

We experience fellowship with us and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Fellowship can be experienced with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

It is a heavenly joy because the joy that we have is from the one who exists in heaven and in that way joy is untouchable.

It is unreachable. It can't be taken away from you. What God gives to us in terms of joy through His Son Jesus Christ is inaccessible to others in terms of being able to rob you of the joy that God has given to you.

[42 : 06] Now you can conceal joy for yourself. You can snuff it out and mask it and put it down but that joy is still there.

It's accessible to you if you have Jesus. He wants you to enjoy and to experience that life with Him that leads to this expression of faith and peace and hope in Him.

It's truly amazing when we consider who God is. The holy God who lets a sinful people come to actually fellowship with Him because of the righteousness of Christ and overcoming our sin and leading us into fellowship with God through faith in Christ salvation is possible and joy can come.

It flows. It is a heavenly joy. Finally It is an abundant joy. Verse 4 says this, We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

Jesus referenced joy and the completion of joy or the filling up of joy on at least three occasions that night with His disciples.

[43 : 25] It is an abounding joy. Those of you who have the New King James will say we write these things so that your joy might be full.

That's what I grew up on and I thought hey that's a great perspective but the real manuscript evidence that's out there would help us understand that not just the joy of the people in Ephesus but John is including himself in this experience of joy.

He says so that our joy might be full. Again going back to the fact that we can fellowship together and we can all experience this joy with one another.

And it's a joy that we can all have. It's untappable. It's inexhaustible. Because it's joy from God it's joy that can never be drained.

One of the amazing things that happened yesterday as I was down with the teens I asked one of the teens I said so what is God teaching you through this experience through this weekend?

[44 : 41] And this teen he didn't have to even think about it. He says well this morning I was really confronted with the truth that whenever I sin I tell God to move over to step aside so I can sit on his throne.

And I have just come to realize how arrogant and how terrible that is. And he said last night I was just really convicted that God has all of these great things in store for me.

All of these treasures that he has placed in heaven for me but when I sin I want the fulfillment of those things now but I realize they never satisfy if I just wait for God to give me his good things there will be things that endure and my heart just exploded wow that's joy joy for me as I get to participate in what God is teaching him and I trust joy for you as parents as these kids will be coming home and you get to see how the word of God has shaped their lives the experience of joy and watching God do awesome things in the lives of others that's when we really get to get filled up with the wonder of who God is and what he came to do in changing dead people and making them alive taking us in our corruption and making us whole redeeming us from the inside out and making us people who are fit to serve him and to love him that's what God wants for us

I trust that through this study God will help us to know and experience joy let's pray Lord we do want you this morning more than just knowing about you God we want to know the joy that you offer through your son Jesus we pray Lord that you would help us through this study help me in my inadequacy to be able to communicate effectively how to get there as we sit at the feet of John the beloved John the apostle soul and as we really come to appreciate who Jesus is we pray that this expression of abiding in you will lead us to an abundant life we pray in Jesus name amen this morning this morning I hope that all of you are experiencing this joy as I was listening it reminded me of

Philippians chapter 4 and this will be familiar to you as well it says rejoice in the Lord always I'll say it again rejoice and it goes on it says let your graciousness be known to everyone for the Lord is near don't worry about anything but in everything through prayer and with petition with thanksgiving present your request to God in the peace of God which surpasses all and guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus and just want to challenge and encourage you this morning as you think on the joy that we are offered if you do not know that joy yet and you would like to we invite you to come forward there are men and women here that would love to share with you pray with you if there are other burdens or sorrows or struggles in your life that are heavy we do want to bear those together just like it says in Galatians that we could bear those burdens together and we encourage you come forward let us bear those burdens with you as well well let's stand together sing together

[48 : 42] I will I will I will I will I