

How Can You Have Joy in the Battle?

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[0 : 00] We'll begin our reading with the last two verses of chapter 14, and then we'll go through verse 11 of chapter 15. So John 14, starting at verse 30, and to John chapter 15, we'll end at verse 11.

You can follow along in whatever English translation you have. I like to read from the King James, but then I'll make sure to exposit using, I think, more of the ESV as well so that you can make sure to find where we are.

I think it's really good for us to hear this same Greek text and a lot of different English translations. So if you please follow along, and as I read this, remember, this is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word.

It's God's very own word for you, His people. If you believe that, you belong to God through Jesus Christ. And when we're done with the reading, I'll say, this is the word of the Lord, and you respond, thanks be to God.

John chapter 14, verse 30. Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

[1 : 12] But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

15.1 Verse 3.

Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can you except you abide in me.

Verse 5. I am the vine. You are the branches. He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit. For without me you can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered. And men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in me and my word abides in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.

[2 : 32] Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit. So shall you be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you.

Continue in my love. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and I abide in his love.

These things I have spoken unto you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God indeed.

You may be seated. The Bible says that the grass withers, and the flower fades, but it's the word of the Lord that endures forever.

Would you pray with me? Would you pray with me? Would you pray with me? Father, may your word, may Jesus Christ, the true vine, abide richly in your people.

[3 : 53] Teach us what it means to abide in our Lord Jesus Christ. For your glory today we ask. Amen. Amen. Well, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, how can you have joy in the battle?

Is it possible to go through the trenches of warfare and still have joy? And if so, how? In 1895, a missionary from Ireland to India named Amy Carmichael.

She traveled on a ship, arrived in India. The first 40 years of being a missionary there, she never went back to visit family or relatives, never went home. 20 years before she ended her ministry there, she had fallen into an uncovered pit, and she fell so badly that it hurt her back, and she had to become bedridden.

So the next 20 years of ministry, she was laid up in a bed in India. She saw the spiritual battle, the wickedness, the violence all around her.

And yet she knew, even being bedridden and in chronic pain, she knew a deeper joy, even deeper than the battle that she had to endure. Listen to what she wrote.

[5 : 15] What prodigal waste it appears to see scattered on the floor the bright green leaves and the bare stem bleeding in a hundred places from the sharp knife.

But with a tried and trusted vine dresser, there is not a random stroke in it all. Listen to this.

Nothing cut away, which it would not have been a loss to keep or gain to lose. There's a deep battle we live in.

Amy Carmichael testifies, there is a deeper joy. In this wonderful little passage of John 15, Jesus tells His disciples, Satan is coming.

Abide in Me. My Father will prune you. Abide in Me. Apart from Me, you can do nothing.

[6 : 19] Abide in Me. Jesus tells us the purpose for this teaching. Look at verse 11. These things I have spoken to you.

Why? That My joy may be in you and that your joy may be full. That's where this ends up.

That's verse 11. Let's walk through the verses between the end of 14 to arrive at that point and see how this promise of our Lord Jesus is trustworthy. How can you have His joy, His deep joy, even in the battle?

I got eight points to get us there. Number one, you and I were born into a spiritual battle. We were entering this world in the midst of a war that's already going on long before we were part of it and that will continue to go on until the Lord returns.

And the moment you are born into this world, there is one person who has more of a claim on you than anyone else. More than your parents have a claim on you, more than your country can claim you, and it's Satan himself.

[7 : 30] You are claimed. Born into this world that's at war, you are claimed by Satan. Look at chapter 14, verse 30. There in the upper room, Jesus tells His disciples, I will no longer talk much more with you for the ruler of this world is coming.

We get a description of what this will look like in a couple chapters. It's chapter 18, verse 3, that says, there will be a band of soldiers, officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, and they will show up in the garden where Jesus and His disciples are with lanterns and torches and weapons. The disciples know there's going to be a confrontation. Peter has his sword ready to go. However, when the darkness of the ruler of this world, when Satan himself through those men encounter Christ and his disciples, the spiritual weight of this war, it makes all those brave disciples who are speaking these bold words just hours prior in the upper room flee.

That's the weight of Satan coming to fight Christ. Ephesians 6, verse 12, confirms this. We battle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

So before you have any business understanding the joy that a person can have in the midst of a spiritual battle, you need to understand the reality you're born into. There is a great battle over your life.

[9 : 16] And unless you belong to the kingdom of Christ, Satan has a claim on you. Satan has you under his rule.

He is the ruler of this world. That's what Jesus calls him. Unless you are ransomed out of that. Because of Adam's sin, the whole world is under the curse and under the dominion of the devil in this present evil age.

Satan has a claim on anyone who is still under Adam. But notice what Jesus says in verse 30. Chapter 14, verse 30.

He has no claim on me. Jesus was born of Virgin Mary. He did not inherit sin from Adam.

Jesus is the only one who was born not being claimed by the ruler of this world. He could have lost that with one sin, one false inclination of his heart.

[10 : 21] But Jesus, at the end of his ministry, before he marches to the cross, he can say, Satan still has no claim on me. Is that good news for you?

No one takes the life of the Son of God, Jesus preached. He lays it down willingly for his sheep. We saw in John chapter 12, verse 31, that when the Son of Man will be lifted up, that's a reference to him being put on the cross.

Jesus said, the ruler of this world will be cast out. That same reference, the ruler of this world, the ruler of this world.

Christ knows exactly how he will defeat the ruler of this world, and it will take him being lifted up.

We're going to see in the next chapter, John 16, verse 11, that when Christ ascends to his Father's right hand, the ruler of this world will be judged and condemned.

That's good news if you belong to Christ. That means you, you are in Christ. You are not under the dominion of the ruler of this world any longer. You're not under the sin of Adam's curse.

[11 : 39] You have been united to Christ. And Satan has no claim on those who belong to Christ. When you are united to Christ, then and only then can you have joy in your battle against sin, Satan, worldliness, and wolves.

There is joy for those united to Christ, even in the worst, most ugly parts of this battle we see here on earth. Does Satan have a claim on you?

Or do you belong to Christ? Because if Christ has a claim on you, Satan cannot touch you. number two, the mission of King Jesus was to love the Father perfectly as a man so that you can share in the joy of God's love.

The love between Father, Son, and Spirit. That's a love that bubbles over into fullness of joy. God wants that for you, but it's only possible if King Jesus takes on that mission to love the Father perfectly as a man, as your second and final representative head, the new Adam.

Notice what Jesus said. This is so cool when I learn this. In 1430, he says, the ruler of this world is coming. Satan is coming. Jesus says, he has no claim on me.

[13 : 04] I do not obey him. I'm not enslaved to the ruler of this world. Look at verse 30 still. I do as the Father has commanded me so that the world may know that I love the Father.

Then he says, rise. Let us go up from here. So you've got to picture this scene. They're in this upper room in Jerusalem.

Most likely, the place where they're at is near the east side of the temple. So as you come out, you look and you see the entrance to the temple. Remember how it faces east? So those taken into captivity pray facing back looking at that entrance as if they could, wishing they could be back in the Holy of Holies with God.

And as they come out, they don't go toward the temple, they go away. They go to the Garden of Gethsemane. The Garden of Gethsemane, it sits at the base of the Mount of Olives.

So if you hear those two, it's really the same place. It just depends how high up you're going. We read in John 18, 1 through 3 that there was a garden which he and his disciples entered.

[14 : 08] And this is where the encounter happens. Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place for Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Jesus just said, the ruler of this world is coming.

Now he tells his disciples, rise up, let us go. Sinclair Ferguson helped me understand that that term, rise up, let us go, is a military term.

Ferguson wrote, he's not talking only about a physical departure from the upper room to the garden. This is a spiritual call to arms. Up and at them is what Jesus is saying.

Since the enemy is coming, let us go and meet him. Jesus calls his disciples to follow him out of the light of that upper room where they broke bread, they drank the vine, the fruit of the vine, to march out, glance at the temple, and go meet the enemy in the darkness on his own terms, on enemy territory.

It's an away game. I'm not sure if it's because they had just had the bread and drank the wine or if it's because they saw looking at the temple what was called the, make sure I get it right, it's called the temple vine and it was this golden piece of artwork that formed the arch.

[15 : 35] You know, as you're approaching the temple grounds and people would make vows and they would promise things to God and then they would attach their promise like, God, if you help me with have a good harvest, I'll give you a bunch of grapes and they would then take those grapes and attach them to this golden archway in the temple.

So either with that within their eyesight or because they just celebrated the Passover and that was the flavor left in their mouth was the fruit of the vine. King Jesus is ready for war.

He knows exactly what this war requires and this is number three. The mission of King Jesus was to become, look at 15.1, the true vine so that you could bear fruit for his father.

Now Jesus could have said, I am the true lamb of God. That would have been true. We know that's who he was. But a lamb is slaughtered. A lamb is an image of death and defeat and sacrifice.

A penal substitutionary sacrifice. And in this moment, going out to meet the ruler of the world, he doesn't want them thinking about him as the sacrifice. He wants them to know I am the true vine. [16:46] It's an image of joy and abundance and victory and life. The enemy will come and plunder the goods of a nation. But I am the true vine.

Verse 1 of 15, he says, I am the true vine and my father is the vine dresser. We just heard from Isaiah 5 how God gave the nation of Israel every loving care that they could ever hope for and yet they bore sour fruit, sour grapes.

That's not the only place we get this image of Israel as God's vineyard. Another place is Psalm 80. In verse 8, Psalm 80 says, you brought a vine out of Egypt. You drove out the nations and planted it.

You cleared the ground for it. But Israel did not bear the fruit. So Jesus says, I am the true vine. I am the fulfillment of all that God has always promised for His people. It's only in me and it's only through me that God's people can do that exact purpose for which He brought them into existence. [18:01] Psalm 80 goes on to say that the vine of God would take deep root and it would fill the land and the mountains would be covered with its shade and the mighty cedars with its branches.

And it sent out its branches to the sea and it shoots to the river. It's the image of this vine sending branches out until God's entire dominion is filled to the very borders all around.

That never happened with national Israel. Jesus says, I am the true vine. I am the one who will fulfill Isaiah 5. I'm the one who will fulfill Psalm 80.

And I will do it through you. In chapter 15, verse 2, Jesus says, Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, He takes away.

And every branch that does bear fruit, He prunes that it may bear more fruit. If you had a vineyard in ancient Israel, the owner of the vineyard himself would be very careful.

[19:05] He would not want to let anyone destroy the vine. So he personally would go through and clip and trim just right. And then his children or other servants would follow along.

And their job was to pick up everything he trimmed, leave it in a pile, give it a week, now it's dry, and you set fire to it and you're done with what was keeping the vine from being as productive as it could have been.

And that's the image Jesus is recalling for his disciples now. It's Christ's fruit inside of his people that brings glory to God.

And that's why Satan wants to battle so much against the fruitfulness of God's people. Satan does not want God to get glory. Satan wants to injure the glory of God as if that were possible.

Satan does not want you to bear the fruit of Christ in your life because that would bring glory to God. That's exactly what Jesus says. That's why God the Father is the vine dresser.

[20:02] It brings him glory to see you bearing fruit, even if that means trimming away and pruning you. A pastor in the 1800s, Westcott, he said, when God is the vine dresser, everything is removed from the branch that diverts the productive power of the vine to bear fruit.

By cutting away what hinders our growth, God makes us more like his son, more fruitful to serve him and to bring him more glory.

See, the triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit uses the pruning, even uses the battle that we're in to bring God glory.

The fruit of the Spirit is God's purpose for your life. That's the purpose of your life, your sanctification. But it's the righteousness of the Son that is the source of God's fruit in your life.

It is the pruning of the Father that is the means he uses to increase your fruitfulness. And that's how the Holy Spirit carries out the purpose of God in bearing fruit, the fruit of Christ's righteousness slowly, gradually, increasingly in our lives in a way that brings zero glory to you and all the glory to God.

[21:21] Number four, Christ justifies you by your union to Christ, not by the fruit of your life. See, we're only two verses into chapter 15 and Jesus already has to bring this important correction to where their minds might be going.

They're just like you and I, our flesh wants to creep in, but look at what Jesus says in verse 3.

Already you are clean. How? How are you clean already? Because of the word that I have spoken to you.

Now, he's talking about being clean. That's a different metaphor than bearing fruit. These disciples would have just walked down the upper room, stepped onto the dusty roads again, walking into the

darkness.

From their perspective, their feet would have been very clean until they just now started following Jesus one more time to do battle in the darkness. You know why their feet would have been clean, right?

What did Jesus do in the upper room? He got down. He washed the dirt off of their feet and took it onto his own body as a servant and he dried them and he wore their dirt on himself.

[22 : 37] That's why he can tell them, you are already clean. I cleaned you. And as he's doing that, he taught them. What he taught Peter was in chapter 13, verse 8, unless I wash you, you have no share with me.

What makes you clean is if Jesus Christ himself washed you clean, then and only then can you have a share in him. Jesus takes your dirt and he puts it on himself.

You are justified by faith upon one condition. It's Christ's work, not your own. You are sanctified, preserved, and finally saved into the age to come by his washing you, not by your own fruit.

Romans 8, 32 says that he spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all. How then, how shall he not also freely give us all things?

It's God himself who gave his son to bear your sin, to make you clean. Of course he will preserve you to the very end. How could he not? And Jesus says, you are already clean by my word, by my finished work.

[23 : 55] He taught them in John chapter 14, verse 20. You are in me as I am in the Father. And the Father is in you. You are with God. You are united to God through Christ.

That's the ministry of the Spirit. You are united with me already. My righteousness covers you already. You can have joy in the battle.

And when the remaining flesh of your own sin deceives you into feeling that you are meriting more of God's favor for yourself, remember this is the same God who delivered up his own son freely.

He freely gives you all things. The promise of God's rich grace is only for you who receive it freely. Not by adding your good works or your fruit to it.

You receive his righteousness freely. You can pray in the words of Milton Vincent the gospel poem in saving God you also have justified me accounting me righteous by your own decree declaring me guiltless of all of my sin and bringing your wrath against me to an end.

[25 : 06] This wrath Christ appeased in full brunt on the tree when in bearing my sin he endured it for me. Christ justifies you by your union to him not by the fruit that he bears in your life.

Number five abide in Christ because apart from him you can do nothing. You can have joy in this battle if you abide in Christ. You can have joy in this battle when you are not relying on yourself to bear the good fruit because that will result in frustration there will be no joy.

But Jesus says in verse four abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine you are the branches whoever abides in me and I in him he it is that bears much fruit for apart from me you can do nothing.

What does it mean to abide when Jesus uses this word here starting in verse four? To abide means to live in Christ.

[26 : 17] It means to dwell in Christ. It means to conduct your life in accordance with Christ. If you don't abide in Christ you are choosing to instead abide in this world under the domain of the evil ruler.

you are choosing instead the eternal fire along with your true master who is the devil. That's what Jesus says in verse six if anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers and the branches are gathered thrown into the fire and burned.

If you abide in Christ he will bear his fruit in you. You're attached to him. It's the sap of the vine that finds life and blossoms and bears fruit in the branches. But if you're not attached to Christ that's how that's how despairing your life should be.

You have only death. You are dried up. You will wither away. You have nothing good coming from inside of yourself. But he says in me you will bear much fruit.

It's the fruit of the Holy Spirit. And abide is such a perfect word to describe our union to Christ and how it is that the Spirit bears fruit because abiding on one hand is relaxed.

[27 : 38] It's resting. It's not laboring. But it's also not passive. It's not rebellious. You are abiding. You are living. You're resting in Christ.

This is a hard thing for us to understand but I think it's the key to sanctification. If you're in this battle against the remaining flesh the sin in your body because the fruit of the Spirit according to 2 Corinthians it includes self-control.

How can it be the fruit of the Spirit but it's also self-control? Who's doing the work here? Well, you could not have self-control if you're apart from Christ. You can't. Our curse from Adam and the remaining flesh it's so twisted and broken.

But the Spirit is that source that allows you to then practice that fruit of the Spirit of self-control. Jerry Bridges helped me with this.

He said, think about sin. It's not that final act. It's not even, really that's not where the battle is won or lost. Take it way, way back to the source. What's really going on in your soul, in your heart, in your mind.

[28 : 48] Jerry Bridges wrote that the mind is like a mental garden of unlawful thoughts. And when a thought pops into your mind you haven't sinned, that just shows you you're in the middle of a battle in this world.

We always will be fighting sin until our last breath. He says, our sinful actions are savored in your mind long before they are tasted in reality. Your thought life is your first line of defense in the battle for self-control.

When you have these thoughts, abide in Christ. When your mind and your remaining sin wants to indulge in the fallen curse of the world, the ruler of this world no longer has dominion over you. Abide in Christ. Think of His goodness. Think of His loveliness. Think of His righteousness. Think of His perfect love for His Father. Think of His coming judgment.

Think of the fire. Think of those branches thrown into the fire. And then how Christ Himself was put into the fire in your place. Think about that and pray for the fruit of the Spirit in your life.

[30 : 03] Pray for God to give you the self-control that you and I, we don't have it. We need it to give a free gift that God will put in us instead. And then we can pray like Amy Carmichael again.

She said, Rid me, good Lord of every diverting thing. Cut it off. Strip it away. May I be in you instead. Abide in Christ.

John Owen said, Be killing sin, lest sin be killing you. Number six, As you abide in Christ, His word abides in you and transforms you for God's glory.

Verse seven says, If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. By this, my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

One pastor commented on a very hard life he lived and he was a man who also wrote some of the most beautiful hymns we have named Horatius Bonar, Scottish pastor in the 1800s.

[31 : 13] Looking back on his own life he said, The road to the kingdom is not pleasant or comfortable as many dream. The end is glory, honor, and peace but the way includes battle, thorns in the flesh, sackcloth, and a cross.

But this is the way that bears much fruit. See, God is glorified when you bear fruit in keeping with repentance. God is glorified when the Father prunes you and you see even more the Spirit working the righteousness of Christ into your life through that.

God is glorified when His preserving grace proves to you and to the world that you are a true disciple of Christ. And God is glorified when you pass through the fire and Christ held you all the way through it and you come out on the other side even more refined when the dross has been burnt away.

Martin Luther was a man who suffered much in his life. He was exiled. He had to live in a different country. He had to be in hiding and disguised. And he said, where the battle rages, there the loyalty of a soldier is proved.

The one who saved you initially will preserve you to the end. We have this promise in Ephesians 2.7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ.

[32 : 43] You are saved for God's glory alone. God will sanctify you for God's glory alone in your life. God will preserve you for His glory alone.

Do not let your heart be troubled in this battle. Instead, rejoice. You are being saved. You are being prepared for heaven. You are being pruned and refined for God's glory.

You can have joy in this battle. Number seven, as you abide in Christ, He works His loving obedience into you.

He's telling His disciples this as a promise. As you abide in Me, you will bear much fruit. But what is this fruit that He's talking about? I believe these verses 9 and 10, they show us He's talking about divine love.

This fruit that He's talking about, like the sap going through a vineyard through the tree, it's the sap that is sourced by God Himself, Father, Son, and Spirit, running through the vine.

[33 : 48] It's the love of God, an otherworldly, heavenly love. And that love pushes itself out through the branches, and it transforms those branches. the ones that were withering on their own.

His love pushes through, and it makes them green, and it makes them flower, and it makes the fruit start to grow and mature. It's the only way that we can not bear sour grapes.

Israel tried it. They tried it with the external law. If that's all you have, you will drive yourself mad.

But if it's the love of God working itself into your life, you know, like the vine and the branches, it's that simple.

You simply will bear the fruit of His love in your life. Notice the logic here in verses 9 and 10. He says, the Father loved the Son. How did the Father show His love to His Son?

Well, He gave Him a good moral law. That's the very next thing He says. The moral law on the Son was a good thing. It was the loving rule of His Father that was the guide for Christ in His life on this earth.

[34 : 56] Christ could have joy, perfect joy, a fullness of joy, while keeping the moral law of His Father. And then Jesus says in verse 9, in that same way, does the Son love the disciples?

And He calls the law that the Father gave Him, He now calls it His law for His disciples. You see how simple but how powerful this is? That's how Christ loves you.

His moral law, the same law He already fulfilled. He shows you the Father's love by saying, these are my commandments. I'm the king over my kingdom. You obey me now.

You don't obey to earn your favor of God or to escape the rash by your own merits. You obey my moral law because you love me. It's my good law. I'm a good shepherd and it's for you who belong to me as my sheep.

In verse 10, He uses a phrase here. He says, just as I have kept the law. When Jesus refers to Himself fulfilling this covenant of works, putting Himself under the law of God perfectly, He says in the past tense, I have kept it perfectly.

[36 : 05] And now for us, the verb is different. It's a continual, active, abiding type of keeping. None of us would be able to get to the end of our lives and say what Christ says, that I have kept God's law perfectly.

But we can say, I learned throughout this life to abide in Christ and to let His good law teach me what it means to be keeping, actively keeping, actively repenting, actively relying on Him because He is the one who kept it perfectly.

number eight. In the midst of this battle, our Lord Jesus Christ gives you joy through His word.

The people of Israel did not want to keep God's law. They had no joy, no delight in trying to please their Lord and walking with Him. Jesus says, that's what will change.

If you belong to me, you're grafted into me. It'll be my love and my joy in you. It'll change your desires. Look at what He says in verse 11. These things I have spoken to you.

[37 : 15] Everything He's taught up to this point. Why? So that my joy may be in you and your joy may be full. God wants you to be full of the joy.

And what joy is it? It's the joy of the Son. That's what He wants you to be full of. You can have joy in this battle if it's the joy of the Son put into you.

It's the love that exists between Father and Son bound by the Spirit. It's applied to you. That can be your own joy in the battle. Amy Carmichael, for the last time here, she said, thank God for the battle verses in the Bible.

We go into the unknown every day of our lives to be a battlefield outwardly. And it's also the unseen part of my life, my spirit. It's often where the sternest battlefield is happening.

But the Lord, your God, goes before you and He shall fight for you. Satan is coming. Abide in me.

[38 : 18] You can have joy even under extreme pressure and attacks by the enemy. My Father is pruning you. I know for a fact some of you right now are going through a season of painful pruning.

Abide in Christ. Abide in me, He says, and I will put my joy inside of you. You don't have it on your own. Abide in His joy.

He says, apart from me, you can do nothing. You look at your life and you want to bear more of His fruit. You desire that. Abide in Christ.

He will bear that fruit for His Father's glory. We have a great verse in Hebrews 12 that tells us what was the joy of the Son because He says, it will be my joy in you.

What was the joy of the Son? Hebrews 12, 2. It was for the joy that was set before Him that Jesus Christ endured the cross, despising the shame.

[39 : 21] And Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the throne of God for the joy set before Him to make you His own. That is the joy of Christ that He wants to put in you.

It's the joy that you get to belong to Him. That's the joy that should fill our hearts. How can the promise for my soul help me in the battle against my flesh?

It's the joy of being united to Christ. That was His joy to endure the cross so that you could be His, so that you could belong to Him. So how do you abide in Christ?

That same verse, Hebrews 12, 2, tells us to look upon Him, the founder and perfecter of your faith. As you abide in our Lord Jesus Christ, He puts His joy in you even in the deepest trenches of spiritual battle and He is the one who makes your joy full.

You be full with the joy of the Lord. Let's pray. Father, we praise You for the loving righteousness of Christ.

[40 : 33] We praise You that He is the source of our love and our joy. And we ask, Lord, as empty vessels to fill us with that good wine. Fill us with Christ's love and joy.

May we drink deeply of Him and be full of Your love. For Your glory we ask. For Christ's sake. Amen.