

Trading My Sorrows for the Joy of the Lord

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[0 : 00] We'll continue in Luke chapter number 24. What a beautiful song. That was a sermon sung to us. There was so much said in that. That was absolutely wonderful, reminding us of our citizenship, where our allegiance lies with the God in heaven.

We're going to pick up in Luke chapter number 24, verse number 35, here in a moment. This is sermon 95. I don't imagine anybody's counting but me, but this is sermon 95. I listened last week.

Pastor Bo preached as he finished. We were going from confusion to clarity. Jesus got off the road to Emmaus, and there he was with them, reveals himself to them.

Now we're going to have verse 35 to the end of the chapter this week and next week, Lord willing. Then we will end the book of Luke, and we will announce the next book we're going to. I know you guys are so excited, but Caleb, don't be camping out next week, all right?

I'll just announce it in the service. There's no reason to do any of that. I know you'll be asking me all week what book it's going to be, but next week we'll announce what book we're going to. And I'm not ready to leave the book of Luke.

[1 : 02] It deserves 100 more sermons, 1,000 more sermons. But as we continue, but 96 sermons isn't a small amount, so we've spent a pretty good amount of time in the book of Luke.

But this Sunday and next, I'm going to read verse 35 to the end of the chapter. And looking at two things, which is the joy and the mission in which was given to them by seeing the resurrected king.

The book of Luke is the story of a coming king. And so the book of Luke doesn't end at the end of Luke, right? We have a sequel to it, which is the book of Acts.

We don't have in the book of Luke about Jesus and after his resurrection what happens, but that continues in the book of Acts.

But the beginning of Luke, if you remember some years ago when we started, we had two ladies that were expecting. And one of them, John the Baptist in the womb, he leaps with joy for the coming Messiah.

[2 : 00] And so the story starts with the one that is promised to come that is going to provide salvation. The one that is going to give forgiveness of sins.

And it brought great joy. And the end of this book ends with great joy. And the book promises a deliverer and the book delivers. He is coming and there's joy and he came and he died in our place.

And so today and next week, we'll look at the joy and the mission that Jesus being in their presence brought. But there is Jesus brought a joy to them and this joy sent them on a mission.

Probably one of my favorite parts in the book of Luke is when we spent time on the prodigal son. So many sermons in that story and we saw the joy of the father.

I love that. That joy of the father is now seen in the disciples. That same joy that they had in seeing that that prodigal son return is a joy that is now available to us.

- [2 : 59] And we share this message. And so we need to spend time looking at what our joy is rooted in. I put it like this as a major premise. They can put this on the slide. But it says this.
- The heart for God glorifying missions starts with joy in the gospel. Our church, Vision Baptist Church, must first cherish the God who sent his own son to save sinners like us.
- Another way to say this is joyless Christians are not going to share a message that they have found to be ineffective. I get emails.
- We were, you know what it means to be a troll. Any of you know what that means? You know, you just kind of bug people. I have a little of that in me. You know, I control people a little bit. All right. Well, we stayed at a place, a rental place.
- They cost a rent it. And we had an alarm clock go off the first day. Not an alarm clock, a smoke alarm. All right. And it said, evacuate the building. And so we had to do that.
- [3 : 57] All right. And I'm sure my brother-in-law said, I knew this was coming as a sermon. All right. Somehow. But what's been funny is that happened. And we were out of our rental for seven hours. It wasn't a very big deal to us.
- Don't tell them that. All right. Because I made them believe it was a big deal to me. All right. And so every time they would text me and they're like, has your problem been settled? And I would send back a picture of a missing alarm clock.
- And I would say, no, I don't have a smoke alarm. Not an alarm clock. I don't have a smoke alarm. All right. And I kept telling them that. And so the day I get an email and the question that I'm asked is, how satisfied are you with the service we received and how willing are you to recommend us to a friend?
- All right. And I'm just going to say, you did a great job and I'm going to move on. Okay. I'm done. I'm done trolling this company and sending them pictures of a missing smoke alarm. But I thought about that.
- And you get a lot of those. I don't know. You get a lot of emails like that. People always want to know. They're always wanting a review. Kind of like you get that tablet. Everybody wants a tip these days. I saw a picture of a person going in the surgery.
- [5 : 02] And right before they fell asleep, there's an iPad over them. The surgeon was asking for a tip. You know, 10, 15 or 20 percent. Everybody wants a tip these days. Everybody wants you to give them on a scale of one to 10, how satisfied you are with their service.
- And as funny as that is to me, I think about as believers, one of the great challenges that we have in sharing the gospel is, how satisfied are you in what Jesus Christ has done in your life?
- Are you willing to recommend this to a friend? On a scale of one to 10, please give an answer. That's where it becomes real. Great offering devotions. Every Sunday we have great offering devotions.
- But David spoke about it becoming real to us. Is it just in some kind of spiritual realm with a small group of people? Or is it real to you? How satisfied are you with what Christ has done in your life?
- And we're going to find that they had a joy. And I want to show you that it was anchored in four truths. The joy that they have are anchored in four truths. So if you will, follow along with me.
- [6 : 01] I'm going to read verse number 35, verse 53. And then I'm going to pray. And they told what these things were done in the way and how he was known of them in the breaking of bread.

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrightened and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are you troubled?

And why do your thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold, my hands and my feet. That is, it is I myself. Handle me and see. For a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have.

And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye any meat? Believe not for joy. That's a very funny expression.

They just believed it was too good to be true. Verse 42. And they gave him a piece of whirled fish and of a honeycomb. And he took it, and he did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all the things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me.

[7 : 09] Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. And he said unto them, Thus it is written, And thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day. And repentance and remission of sins shall be preached the name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

And you are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but you tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as Bethany.

And he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them and carried it up in the heaven. And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen. That ends the reading of the book of Luke. I want to show a picture of you of two missionaries that made it to the field last week.

It's in the presentation a little higher up. I'm going to pray for them. I'm also going to pray for Cammie Richardson as I continue to do. I'm going to pray for the guests that we met last night. I'm going to pray for their joy.

[8 : 09] And each one of those people that I mentioned last week, Kyle and Hannah made it just a couple days ago. They left on Thursday, made it to Peru. And the Elrods made it back to the country in which they are serving in.

And I can't do much in their country. I'll be with Kyle in a few weeks, in two weeks in Chile. And we get to walk around the area that is going to plant a church. And I don't have a lot of expertise to tell him, like I wouldn't put it on top of a mountain.

I wouldn't put it underwater. I wouldn't put it on the wrong side of a train track. I don't know what to tell you. I don't have a lot to offer him in that regard. And as my Spanish speaking friends in here know, I try, but I don't speak Spanish in a point that I could go and help see a church started in that country.

So what is my connection to him and what can I do? And when I pray for these families, I pray that they will return to us with joy. Because joy and mission is interconnected.

They are intertwined. The joy can stop and the mission won't go forward. As the mission will only go forward as we are people that recognize that he is sufficient and enough in our lives.

[9 : 17] So I will pray for them and then I will help them fight for joy. Every chance I get, every opportunity that I can. I'm going to talk to them. I'm going to encourage them. And so that's my prayer. That's my prayer for Cammie today as she's battling cancer.

I pray for her joy in the Lord. I pray for our guests last night. If they don't know Jesus Christ, they may have something in this life that seems satisfying. They may have some form of happiness, but there's so much more to life.

There's a true freedom that's available. So I want to pray for that as we get into this passage. Heavenly Father, I thank you for the joy that we see here and the disciples that is available to us today.

I pray for my friends as they're now serving on the field. I thank you for bringing Mike and Deanna Staley back here, Lord, with great joy. A joy of telling how you've done something. A joy of telling us that of all the things that they could have seen happen, that they rejoice, Lord, in your name.

That you have done a work. That it's your name that has power. And just like in the story of the 70, Lord, they've returned with joy. And I thank you that they have done that. And I pray for all of our friends overseas that they will return to us with joy.

[10 : 29] Father, I pray for those that I met last night. Lord, I met believers, people that know you. And I thank you for that. And I pray that they have the joy that's available to us as believers. And I pray for the many people I've met over the last few days, Lord, that just don't know you.

And I pray for their joy. And I pray that they would come to a saving knowledge of you. Recognize that they're sinners in need of a Savior. And that there's something, Lord, them that will not be met by anything in this world.

That only your son's death could reconcile their relationship to you. And I thank you for the time that we'll get to spend in your word. In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen. Stephanie and I were with a group of people that had adopted children. And they shared with us. One of them shared about how their son, as a teenager, he had a very bad attitude.

He was quite bitter about all the things that had happened to him in life. And for a senior trip, they sent him on a missions trip to Guatemala. And he said he wasn't much interested in the things that were going on.

[11 : 34] But one night, underneath the tent, in a revival service, he was listening to what was being said. And there was a connection between what Jesus Christ had done for him and his real life.

It became real to him. And as they were singing a song, I'm trading my sorrows for the joy of the Lord. How many of you know that song? I just love that song, all right? We need somebody to sing that. We need to sing that soon, all right?

I'm trading my sorrows for the joy of the Lord. And he just said all this Christian stuff that he had learned and all these things in his life that seemed to not be right. There seemed to be a connection that he realized that Jesus Christ's death and resurrection makes a difference in his life.

And he said he went out to the field nearby and he just laid down on the ground and he said, Lord, I want to trade my sorrows in for the joy of the Lord. He got up that day not only having joy, but being on mission in life, which was to spread that joy, they're interconnected.

I've shared my testimony so many times I would think that you would know it, but in my life, I did not go looking for something to do with my life. But as a Christian at 18, having lost my father of a drug overdose and the summer that followed and waking up every morning, opening up a graduation card that he hadn't filled out, I was looking for something as I would flip through the scriptures that would help me make sense of what was happening in my life.

[13 : 00] And I found the joy in serving our Lord. I found purpose. I found certainty. I found his presence. And all those things became available. And I experienced those as I serve other people and I serve the Lord in obedience to his word.

And so here in this passage here, we have some people that had come. And if you look in verse number 11 of the chapter, their words seem to be as idle tales and they believe them not.

Jesus is risen. The grave is empty. It doesn't seem real to them. It was idle to them. But when we get to verse number 36, it says he stood in their presence and he said, peace be unto you.

As Pastor Bo showed you last week, he didn't need the knock because he wasn't going to use the door, right? You only have to knock if you plan to use the door. But he was right there in the middle of them in their presence.

And it becomes real to them. It begins to seek into their heart. And they recognize the implications that it has upon their life. That is maturing.

[14 : 06] It is the recognize it. You know, if you're younger, you don't understand something. You could tell something. When your kids are little, they're like, how much longer do we have in the car? And you're like, why does it matter? You have no understanding of numbers, right?

I'm going to give you a number, but it ain't going to mean anything to you, all right? Or when the missionaries in China said, well, there's a virus that's taking place over here. And I'm like, okay, but what does that have to do with me here in America?

You know, I had no idea the implications of that truth. Or when Stephanie was expecting their first child, she says, we're going to have a child. I had an immature understanding of what that was going to do to my life, all right?

Love you kids. That sounded rough, all right? But you have changed things drastically, all right? I had an immature understanding, a not fully developed understanding of the implication that truth would have upon my life.

And as believers, we so often don't recognize that Jesus in our presence has the risen Lord, the implications that it has upon our lives. And with every breath and everything that God gives me the rest of my life, I want to help unbelievers and Christians understand the implications of the gospel upon your life.

[15 : 19] It not only changes our eternity, but it changes our life. And so what were the words to a group of people that had betrayed him, that had denied him, that had abandoned him, who didn't believe in them? He said, peace be unto you.

A Lord that is gracious, a spirit of forgiving. He could have recounted all the details of their failure. But just like when he was headed to the cross, he says, let not your heart be troubled. And then he told them in John chapter number 16, he says, and now you therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again.

And what will happen in John 16, 22? I will give you a joy that is not of this world.

I will give you a joy that's only given to me by me being there. You're going to have sorrow, but I'm going to show back up. And when I do, your hearts are going to rejoice. I don't know if you paid attention to the words of the song that was sung, but it spoke about persecution.

Last night I shared, I love the religious liberty that I'm given here, and I want to use it to the full extent. There may come a day in my lifetime or my kid's lifetime where they will not have that, but it doesn't mean that the joy of the Lord can be taken away from them.

[16 : 30] And so we'll continue to meet until the Lord returns, and we can do that. And so people say that the disciples here believe that they might not have believed that Jesus was really risen. It was just kind of a spiritual sin.

See, he lives in our hearts, or the Christ force was at work in them. These are things that people would say. They would say he's risen in the sense that his teaching lives on in our hearts. But that is exactly what this passage is not saying.

It goes out of its way, if you will, to point out that he could be seen, he could be felt, he could be touched. And in a few minutes, he will order fish and chips. Now he will sit down with them, and he will eat with them.

And so it's not like your grandmother who lives on in your memories through the things that she taught you, unless your grandmother is regularly taking food off of your plate. All right? Jesus was there.

It was real. It was certain. And Christianity rises and falls on this point. We are all in on this. All right? All chips in on this. Not just on what he taught us, but what he did for us.

[17 : 33] Because if he did not pay the penalty of sin on the cross and rise again, then my sins are still unforgiven. And in 1 Corinthians 15, I am most miserable, but I'm not most miserable.

I am joyful because it was real. He showed his hands. He showed his feet. And when he spoke of us, he showed those things to him. And why his hands? Why his feet? And you know the answer. It was the nail scars.

There was evidence that was there. Have you ever walked away from an offer just because it seemed to be too good to be true? Sometimes you'd rather pay a higher price for something. It's a used car or maybe a timeshare or gas station sushi.

I'd rather pay \$7 for sushi than \$5. Really? I just don't want too good of a deal on sushi. All right? It's just too good of a deal to be true. That's what they said in verse 41.

And while they yet believed not for joy, this is just too good to be true. Thankfully, the story didn't end with scared and confused disciples, but it ends with joyful disciples that are going to share a message of hope with the next generation.

[18 : 39] And it made it to me when it made it to my teenage sister. And it made it to me. And I don't want it to stop with me. I want it to continue with me. And so they overcome the doubt and they find joy as he's standing in the room that day.

And it's kind of counterintuitive in here. He says, I'm leaving. Yes, I'm your leader. And no, I'm not setting up an earthly kingdom, kingdoms of heaven. And he told them this.

And he says, you're going to go and carry a cross and you're going to lay down your life and you're going to die. And they still had joy. And they still had joy. And so what is joyful about this?

It's that their joy was anchored in things that were real. Eric went home to tell the story of the mic last night. After he explained it to us, it was quite funny. All right. After like so many jokes.

You know, they're like frogs. If you have to dissect it, they usually die. All right. But he said, how much does a ship weigh that is on the water? And that's something I guess they ask in the Navy.

[19 : 36] How much does a ship weigh that is on the water? And the cadets would try to figure out how much that they weighed. And the answer is they weigh whatever the anchor weighs.

If you don't understand. No, that's not the case. All right. Apparently, you didn't explain it very well. All right. They weigh whatever the anchor weighs. That's not how it goes. They weigh the anchor. They weigh the anchor to find out how much the ship weighs.

They weigh the anchor. It's called to weigh the anchor. They throw the anchor. You weigh the anchor. You weigh. You throw the anchor. I have no idea what any of that means. I'm just going to keep preaching anyway like it makes sense.

All right. Here. Let me tell you what I thought he told me. Okay. I thought he was explaining to me that a ship weighs as much as the anchor. And I didn't understand why that was funny. All right.

And then I thought, but this is convenient because tomorrow I'm talking about anchors. All right. And I should have done some fact check. I still don't understand. That's an expression. They weigh the anchor. You weigh your anchor.

[20 : 37] All right. How many of you know what he's talking about in here? A lot more. All right. Just not me. Brother Doris, you can help me after here. Okay. But you throw over the anchor that was there.

And so I'm going to move away from there. There was an anchor involved. Here we're talking about your joy being anchored to something. I do know what I'm talking about now. All right.

All right. Back into what I know what I'm talking about. All right. I talk about your joy being anchored in some things and some reality. And so for me just to say, and time is getting away from us here.

But for me to just tell you to have joy, that's just, that will just annoy people. All right. Have joy. Have joy. But I want you to see why when they saw Jesus in their presence and the resurrection, it allowed these group of people who weren't promised earthly goods, who weren't promised anything but death, they had incredible joy and they worshiped because the resurrected Christ meant that four things were certainly true.

First of all, there's a certainty that is there. Why are you troubled? Why do your thoughts arise in your heart is what he asked. And it's not more than this wishful thinking.

[21 : 44] It's not they fight back against, because the Christians are going to say, we don't fight against our enemies. We die willingly. They, they would say that they made, some people would say they made up this story about Jesus.

It means that they were sitting around one day after Jesus had died fishing. They had died, he had died and they were fishing. And Peter jumps up and he says, I know. Let's tell everyone that he's resurrected and he'll, and we'll get to be a leader of the new religion.

Except let's teach everyone that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. And so we'll give away all of our money. And when other people try to kill us, we won't fight back. And maybe, just maybe, if we're lucky, we can all get martyred through painful, humiliating death, us and our families, and all the disciples are like, that's a great idea.

Me first. Does that sound logical to you? No, because it isn't logical. They did not create a religion and say this. They did not create a religion that says that it's of another world.

This happened and it spread because Jesus Christ had really risen from the dead and was there in their presence. And that's why the message has continued to spread because it's a certainty.

[22 : 57] It's why we celebrate the death of Jesus. From the earliest times, the early Christians celebrated his death. They didn't mourn it. When leaders are martyred, we don't celebrate their death, but we mourn it.

We celebrate the birth of Lincoln and of this nation. We don't have little ceremonies to celebrate how they were murdered or how it would end, but they celebrated Jesus' death as they saw that death was swallowed up in victory.

I haven't been to Israel. Mike went back in January. One of the things that I hear about that is that we're not certain where the tomb is that Jesus was buried. There's two locations that they think are very likely.

One of them are the case. And why is the reason that we wouldn't know this? There's two major guesses here that they would have, and there's two of them.

The earliest Christians believed that Jesus rose from the dead. It gave them a joy that was there. And so people weren't visiting it. You know, it becomes something to you when somebody dies.

[23 : 58] You know, my shoes will mean something possibly to my great-grandkids if I was to pass away. But right now they don't mean anything because I'm still alive. To the early Christians, that tomb didn't mean anything because he was alive.

He wasn't there. They weren't commemorating it. They weren't setting it up as a place of ceremony because he was alive and he had walked out of it. And it's the one of the many things that testify of the fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead with certainty.

And this matters. It really matters. Greg loves the book, *The Case for Christ*, by Lee Strobel. Many of you have probably read it. If you haven't, I strongly recommend it. He's putting together an elective on it. And one of the quotes that he has in that, he says, Science and faith are not at war.

When scientific evidence and biblical teaching are correctly interpreted, they can and do support each other. I'd say to anyone who doubts that, investigate the evidence yourself.

And I can tell you that the evidence is enough that convinced me to stake my life in eternity on the fact that Jesus Christ rose again. And we need to teach it to everybody that we can.

[25 : 04] He really rose again. And him rise again, it brought us hope. Hebrews 6.19, it speaks about anchors. And it's much easier to understand than Eric Withom talking about anchors, all right?

Hebrews 6.19. Which hope have we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the veil? Our hope is anchored.

So, to have joy in this life, you have to have some certainty. This idea that there's nothing that's true, there's no way to know what is truth, that does not lead to happiness. That does not lead to joy. That leads to confusion.

There are things in this world that are certain, like Jesus Christ rising from the dead. The things that the Bible would say. If you're going to have joy, you need to be anchored in certainty.

It also is anchored in hope. Which hope we have anchored of the soul? He gave them a picture of a future resurrection. He showed them creation at its fullest. He could be touched.

[25 : 59] He could eat fish. He could walk in the rooms. Now we have five senses. Taste, smell, touch, sight, and hearing. Maybe in heaven we'll have a hundred. Imagine trying to describe light to someone who's not able to see.

Paul says about heaven, Eye has not seen nor ear has heard. I take that to mean that we don't have the capacity to understand all that God has prepared for us.

There's a change in the resurrection. It demonstrates there's a purpose in his plan. The scars were still there. And it wasn't in spite of the wounds, but it was because of them.

And we have hope. Proverbs 13, 12 says, Hope deferred, maketh the heart sick. But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life. That means there's nothing worse than what you've built your hope in is taken away and you're left with nothing.

Anything but Jesus will be taken away from you and can be lost. So we can't put our hope in anything outside of him. Joy cannot be established on anything else, anything that's even good.

[27 : 01] In your livelihood, in your family, the only sure hope is to put it in Jesus. And that's what they were doing that day. They put it in Jesus.

It also gives us an anchor. Sir John Templeton says this. I just loved it. It says, Would it not be strange if a universe without purpose, which is what we've all been taught, right?

This is a universe without purpose. Would it not be strange if a universe without purpose accidentally created humans who are so obsessed with purpose? We are obsessed with purpose, right?

Aren't we in our lives? And if this is true, if Jesus Christ rose from the dead, proving that he is God, proving that he has paid for our sins, if the resurrection is true, then the bucket list in your life, it doesn't matter.

Whatever you miss out on here on earth is going to be so much better in heaven. And our refusal to believe that this keeps us from being able to live like true disciples because we're so obsessed with the fear of missing out.

[28 : 05] What is that? The fear of missing out. We even have a term for it. And it is FOMO, right? All right. It is the fear of missing out. F-O-M-O. We live our lives with the fear of missing out.

Little kids have it. Adults have it. You have two good options. Which one are you going to choose? So many times as Christians, we do not have the purpose in which God has given us. We have this fear of missing out because we think this is all there is to life.

And that's robbing you of your joy. Not having an eternal paradigm, not having an understanding of what is to come is of greater value than anything on this earth is causing you to miss out.

Obtaining everything down here is not essential. But what does matter are people. Jesus' followers recognize this. We recognize that people matter.

Here in this story, so many times they don't recognize Jesus until he says, Hey, it's me. And then they look and they say, Oh, yes, it is you. The resurrected Christ.

[29 : 08] There's a graduating or a blossoming of this. Heard a pastor explaining it like this. And it makes sense to me. Hope it does of you. My youngest daughter is eight.

And I can imagine what she will look like as a grown lady. I can imagine. We always joke and we say that we're going to spend Thanksgiving at Selah's house when the kids are grown. I'm not sure why they've decided that.

But we believe that she's going to have a house big enough for all of us to go into someday. And so I imagine what Selah will look like at the age of 28. If something was to happen, if I was to get taken away for 20 years, I go on a three-hour tour with Gilligan and I'm gone for 20 years.

And then I come back and I see Selah and I don't immediately recognize her after being separated. And she has grown up. But then after a while, she says, Dad, it's me.

And I recognize that it's her, that it's a grown, a more mature version of Selah. Could it be that way in the resurrection? You'll see people and you'll say, I knew it.

[30 : 15] I always knew you could be like this. I saw little flashes of this in your best moments, but only little flashes and only in your best moments. And now there is a perfectness in what Christ has done and a maturing.

And so we invest our lives in people right now for what's what matters. We are watering the seeds that will flower into the most beautiful Christ-likeness. I read this to you before from the famous sermon, Weight of Glory, but it's been some time.

It is a serious thing to remember that the dullest, the most uninteresting person you talk to, may be one day be a creature which you saw. If you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare.

All day long we are in some degree helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is the light of these overwhelming possibilities. It is with the awe and the circumcision proper to them that we should conduct all our dealings with one another.

All friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. We have never talked to a mere mortal. It is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit.

[31 : 30] Immortal whores are everlasting splendors. This does not mean that we are perpetually solemn. We must play, but our merriment must be of the kind and it is in fact the merriest kind which exists between people who have, from the outset, taking each other seriously.

People matter. We are eternal. And so it matters in here. We have a purpose in life. We have the real dignity of real responsibility in each other's lives.

We are eternal people. And so here it says that people all over the world matter. Verse 47, And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem.

And so He lifts up His eyes to the nations. The gospel must be preached to all nations. The people must be called to repentance, receiving the gift of forgiveness. You can enjoy creation in eternity, but right now you get one shot at the souls of people.

And these guys had a joy that came from knowing that Jesus had an eternal purpose that they were part of. It's real. Brother Mike, I haven't met those people in Spain that you're ministering to, but they're real and they're eternal.

[32 : 47] And life has purpose in sharing the gospel to them. And that purpose doesn't make us miserable, but it brings us great joy. Because even though they are eternal and we have such a solemn message, we have great joy because we get to tell them Jesus really did come back from death.

He really overcame. The grave is really empty. As I was on the land water border, I'm a Baptist preacher so I don't go to the beach, but as I was on the land water border, some of you get that, some of you just don't find it funny.

All right. But as I was on the beach this week with my kids, and as we were there, and I'm watching and they build the sand castle, and that sand castle only stands if the tide decides to let it stand, and it's going to go, I just thought about eternity.

And very soon, every one of these sand castles that we're building are going to be gone. And the only thing that's going to last for eternity are the souls of men and women that we come into contact with every day.

We have a real purpose, and it really matters. We have a message. And then lastly, I'll be as brief as possible, but we're not having church tonight. All right. And some of you say, well, I wasn't planning to come back anyway.

[33 : 57] Well, that's on you. All right. And so, I'm going to steal a few minutes. All right. Joy was anchored in the presence, in his presence. Two meals in this chapter. What a wonderful thing, love about Jesus.

In this short passage, there's two meals. It starts with a meal, and it ends with a meal. It says, and my commentary is that, eating is a sign in Jewish culture of intimate fellowship. Isn't that the case in every culture?

Eating is a sign of intimate fellowship. You have meals with friends, and that's what we're seeing here, is that when it heightens the fact that Jesus is there with them, he's not just there in the room, he's there eating a meal with them.

My friends stopped by. Oh, you had a conversation. My friends came by for a meal that expresses more of an intimate relationship. The God who created the heaven and the earth, who left heaven to come for them, who died a gruesome death to save them, who still had scars on his hands and feet, to prove his love for them, that God was always with them, is now living inside of them, and he's standing there in their presence, and it brought great joy to them.

And so, how will these believers and other believers in the New Testament, they'll express it. They'll use expressions like in Romans 5, 5, where they will say, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

[35 : 13] They will say that in a time that has real persecution. They will say that in a time where they will be living with far less than we will have, but they will talk about the love of God.

Or Philipians 4, 4, Rejoice always, the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. They speak of rejoicing. Or in 1 Peter 1, 4, they speak of an inheritance that's incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them.

Or Romans 8, 31, What shall we say then, then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against this? Their joy was rooted in His presence.

Hey guys, you know that Jesus isn't setting up an earthly kingdom. Yes, He rose from the dead, but we are all going to die. Martyrdom is very certain. Just like those that, on a much bigger scale, it says those that signed the Declaration of Independence were signing a death, that they were traitors, and they were risking their lives for a nation.

These people, in saying that Jesus Christ was risen from the dead, they knew that being martyrs was very likely. But what could they say? What can separate us from the Word of God?

[36 : 23] He's right here. There's His presence. And so we seek a presence in our lives, something that we will, to fill our lives with satisfaction. Some of you sought it in marriage, and many of you got married, thinking that you'd marry the perfect companion, and you'd ride blissfully off into the sunset with happiness and joy, but you're disappointed.

That's because you were looking for a marriage, for something only God can give. The arms you sought in romantic love were His arms. The thrill you sought in drugs were His presence.

The security and significance and soul delight you sought in money can only be found in Him. What is the great allure of social media? It is a constant presence.

I'm never alone. There is a security that is found here. If you don't believe that you're finding your security in it, how do you act when your phone dies? Do you find yourself insecure?

Then that means that you're finding security in it, or an identity. Who am I? Posting causes us to focus on aspects of our lives that we believe that others will find interesting. Where do I belong?

[37 : 28] What is my purpose? What is my competence? All these things. What do I do well? What do people say? As has been said, if I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.

And that is true. There is so much desire to live with constant presence of something that will satisfy, and nothing in this world was made to do that for you.

It will only be found in Him. So we could say it like this, is that your ability to have joy in all things is the measure of how much you understand and believe the gospel.

If you knew the treasure of the gospel, even when other parts of your life go wrong, you are not devastated because you have something better than life. They worshiped and they left with joy.

The disciples will be shipwrecked, beaten, despised, lied about, and mistreated. But they had a joy that amazed everyone. They had a joy.

[38 : 33] And they went forward on their mission with incredible joy. That's what's available to us. I mentioned at the beginning that they returned with joy. The 70 returned with joy.

The missionaries returned with joy. I pray that when I see you next week that you're returning with joy. That you leave this place on mission, recognizing that joy is possible.

If there's a certainty, the tomb is empty. His presence is here with us. It provides a purpose for us. And all those things are essential and necessary for you to find joy in your life.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I pray with my friends here today, my brothers and sisters in Christ. Lord, for the sake of them, I pray for their joy.

But Lord, for the sake of the mission, I pray for their joy. It will not go forward. Your message of hope will not go forward with joyless Christians who believe that the gospel is ineffective in their lives.

[39 : 36] And so, Lord, I pray now that people will recognize that. With heads bowed and eyes closed, and Christians, I ask that you would pray. Would you speak to the Lord? Would you recognize if you've been in what you considered a season of joylessness and you just said, I've just been here for too long.

Let the day be the day. It's not a change in circumstances. It's a day of maturing and recognizing that the empty tomb has everything to say about your ability to have joy in your current circumstances.

and recognize the great implications of the gospel upon your life. If you're in here today and you do not know that joy, you've never recognized that you needed a Savior, can I tell you, you most certainly do.

The reason they rejoiced that Jesus was risen again, not just because their friend was dead and now is alive, is because they were in need of a Savior, just like you and I are.

we needed Him to die in our place because without Him we would be forever without hope. And so I'll offer you hope today, a hope that is anchored in the resurrection, a hope that will provide you joy.

[40 : 49] So there in your seat, if you're in this room or watching online, I would encourage you to pray and say to our Heavenly Father that you recognize that His death was in your place and that that joy of the Father would be spread to you today as you would receive the offer of salvation.

Love to talk to you more about it. Love to give you resources. Love to connect you with somebody that could help you one-on-one. Believer or unbeliever, let me help you take the next step today.

If you've never believed, that's where this journey starts. Put your faith and trust in Jesus. But as a believer, follow Him obediently. Make this real in your life.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for the time in your Word. Lord, I pray that my brothers and sisters in here, that they will fight for joy. Maybe they've given up on it.

Maybe they've decided that it's just not possible at this season. Lord, may they see that their joy can be anchored into something that is eternal and that it is real. Father, if there's one among us in here today or others who do not know you as Lord and Savior, I pray that they will find a joyful Christian that will show them what their true source of joy is and how it comes from the gospel of Christ.

[42 : 05] In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.