



SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Morningside Church

If you have a need or a prayer request, contact the church office.

850.878.5503

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Title: Joy

Date: December 18, 2022

Scripture Text: John 15:10-11

We continue our celebration of Advent with the focus this week on JOY. Advent is an opportunity to remember the birth of Jesus while waiting for His return (celebrating His first coming while we look forward to His second). Joy and happiness are often used synonymously, yet they are not the same. Happiness is determined by our circumstances. Joy is a choice we make despite our circumstances. But the only way to experience true joy is in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Jesus wants you to experience joy for two reasons: to *witness* and to *work*. Our experience and expression of joy, regardless of our circumstances, is an attraction to others. By this, you bear witness of the source of your joy, Jesus. Joy can also help equip us for the work we are called to do as Christ's disciples. As we serve, if we are not joyful in our service, it can become burdensome. To intentionally be joyful in the work we are called to do though, we experience blessing.

Let's look at 3 truths about JOY:

I. The Source of Joy

People seek joy in many places, including power and possessions. We think that with power, we might be able to control our situation better. We can also grow exhausted in the pursuit of possessions. We think that by having enough stuff, we will find joy. The problem is there is never enough. Jesus is the source of joy. If you have a hard time being joyful, regardless of your circumstances, you might be plugged into the wrong source.

- What are examples of individuals who have pursued power, thinking it would bring them joy.
- In what ways might power be pursued?
 - What types of power do people pursue?
- Why would someone think possessions could bring joy?
- What are the types of possessions people acquire to find joy?
- Describe a time when you pursued power or possessions as the source of joy.
- Describe the circumstances that led you to the true source of joy?

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II. The Stability of Joy (John 15:11)

The joy that Jesus provides is stable and constant. If we are not experiencing joy, it's not because something took it, but we willingly forfeited it. We often do that when our focus is on our circumstances and not the God of our circumstances. We may get too wrapped up in the 'why' of our circumstances, trying to understand it all. But [Proverbs 3:5](#) tells us to trust in the Lord and not to lean on your own understanding. Don't let your circumstances distract you from the constant joy of Jesus.

- Describe what the stable joy of Jesus is like.
- When was a time when you allowed your circumstances to distract you from Jesus' joy.
- What are some things you can do to not forfeit your joy?
- What are ways you can encourage someone else on how to experience joy?

III. The Sufficiency of Joy (John 15:11)

The substance of joy is Jesus! We see in [John 15:5](#) how we experience Jesus' joy; *abiding in Him*. How do we abide in Him? [John 15:7](#) tells us that we must have His word in us. We must be both hearers and doers of His word. Jesus' joy was in doing the will of His heavenly Father. We will experience joy by doing what Jesus calls us to do. When we do, only then will our joy be FULL!

- What does it look like to abide in Jesus?
- How do we get His word in us and keep it there?
- Why is it important to be both hearing and doing God's word?
- What is one activity you will do this week to be able to experience Jesus' joy?

I bear my testimony that there is no joy to be found in all this world like that of sweet communion with Christ. I would barter all else there is of heaven for that. Indeed, that is heaven. As for the harps of gold and the streets like clear glass and the songs of seraphs and the shouts of the redeemed, one could very well give all these up, counting them as a drop in a bucket, if we might forever live in fellowship and communion with Jesus.

— Charles Haddon Spurgeon