

## The Joy of the Lord: Presence, Power & Purpose - Continued

Scripture Reading: John 17:1-26

Hebrews 12:2 tells us that our Lord Jesus had joy set before Him when He went to the cross. Jesus despised the shame, yet this joy caused Him to endure the cross, to endure the contradiction and hostility of sinners against Himself. What is this joy? Before Christ went to the cross, He spent time praying to His Father (John 17). This is known as Christ's priestly prayer. It reveals the joy that was set before Him. It summarizes the mission that the Father sent His Son to accomplish. The shared purpose and the promised outcome of this mission brought joy to the Son of God (Psalm 2:1-9; 22:1-31; Isaiah 8:13-18; 52:13 – 53:12). **The Father sent His Son:**

- To manifest the truth of the Father through His life and through His words (**John 17:6-8**).
- To gather a people who would worship and serve God through the gospel (**John 17:8-12**).
- To separate His people from the world's influence and control (**John 17:6,9,14-17**).
- To release His people back into the world, so that through the work of the gospel they would call others out from the world's influence and control, into the fellowship of the Father and His Son (**John 17:18-21** cp. I John 1:1-4).
  - This fellowship provides unity with the Father, with the Son, and with each other: oneness of love, of purpose, and of intimate communication (**John 17:22-26**).
  - This fellowship will last now and forever (**John 17:24**).
  - This fellowship will be the fulfillment of Christ's pleasure and joy (**John 17:11,13**).
    - Christ's pleasure will be fulfilled **for** His people.
    - Christ's joy will operate **in** and **through** His people, influencing others.
    - Confidence in the Father's mission gave Christ joy. We need this confident joy of the Lord to be our strength (**Hebrews 12:1-3; Matthew 28:18-20**).

When we focused on John 15:11, we saw Christ's plan for the joy of the Lord to be a working force in the lives of His people. Now, as we focus on **John 17:11,13**, we are aware that the Lord's physical absence will be compensated by the presence of His joy. This comes as a benefit of the indwelling of Christ's Spirit (John 14:15-27; 16:4-7 cp. **John 17:21-23,26**). To get a better idea of what that means, we are going to look at three statements in John chapter sixteen.

### **Powerful Connection – John 16:19-22**

Christ's resurrection brings joy! The presence of the resurrected Christ, living within us, brings power into our lives. See I Peter 1:3-5,8,20-21; Ephesians 1:17-20; John 14:19; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 3:10.

### **Prayerful Connection – John 16:23-24**

The living Christ provides us with a fulfilling prayer life! The Father hears us and answers our prayers for Christ's sake. In prayer we get to experience the presence of the Lord. When His presence becomes real to us, we experience joy (John 14:13-14; 15:7,16; 16:26-28; I John 5:14 cp. Psalm 140:13; 31:19-24; 116:1-8; 16:7-11).

### **Positional Clarification – John 16:33**

Joy comes from knowing, "*Where do I stand?*" I am in the world, but not of it. I belong to Christ. I am in Christ (i.e., God sees me as positioned with Christ / identified with Christ). Christ has overcome the world. Therefore, I have overcome the world with Him / through Him. I have peace. I can be of good cheer – joyful (Galatians 1:3-4; I John 4:4; 5:4-5,19-20; Romans 8:28-39).

About Trials and Sufferings in this world:

Presently

- I am being preserved through all my trials and sufferings.
- I am being perfected (taught and strengthened) by these trials and sufferings.
- I am being positioned during my trials and sufferings, so that I can be more useful to God in reaching out and helping others.

In the future

- I will be rewarded for faithfulness while suffering for Christ's sake.
- I will share Christ's glory and kingdom.

Scripture for the above teachings: Psalm 34:19; James 1:2-4,12; Romans 5:1-5; 8:18,35-39; I Corinthians 1:4-8; II Corinthians 1:3-7; Ephesians 1:17-18; 2:4-7; II Timothy 2:1-12; 4:18; Matthew 5:10-12; I Peter 4:12-14.

Paul suffered trials in His ministry. See the example of His good cheer / joy (Acts 20:17-24; 24:1-10; Philippians 1:12-30; 2:17 cp. II Corinthians 6:1-10).

**Conclusion:** When you know the Lord, there is always a reason to rejoice! See I Thessalonians 5:9-11,16-18,23-24; Ephesians 5:18-20; Philippians 3:1; 4:4; Psalm 16:11.