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# Sermon Notes

September 15, 2019

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Have Joy Like Jesus Galatians 5:19-23

### Where's The Joy?

- ❖ On the night before Jesus' crucifixion, Jesus talks with His disciples about the unique connection that exists between Him and them
  - John 15:1, *I am the true vine, you are the branches*
  - our connection with Jesus, the true vine is marked by
    - loving God and loving others
    - faithful, loving obedience
    - joy: *These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.* (Jn. 15:11)
- ❖ Is joy an outstanding characteristic of what people see and experience when they encounter you?
- ❖ Part of the "family likeness" we get from our Father is the presence of His joy in our lives
  - how are you doing with that?
  - is there room for improvement?

- both Jesus and Paul say there is a fullness of joy that is part of the birthright of every believer
- Jesus is a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, but His life is also marked by joy (Hebrews 12:2-3)

### The Joy of Jesus

- ❖ Jesus has done everything you need to cause His joy to bubble up inside you and spill out through you
- ❖ Jesus' joy **IN** you is **EVANGELISTIC**
  - joy is contagious
  - you need to let Jesus' joy flow through you like sap flows through the branches of a tree
- ❖ Like everything in the fruit-bearing process
  - you are totally dependent on God for the presence of His supernatural, life giving joy in your life
  - you are completely responsible for sustaining and improving the conditions in which the fruit of joy develops inside of you
    - joy is NOT optional
    - true Christian joy is both a privilege **AND** a duty

### Removing Roadblocks to Joy

- ❖ As counterintuitive and "unjoyful" as it may sound, begin by realizing that God commands you to be joyful (1 Th 5:16, Phil 4:4, Rom 14:17)

- ❖ Check out your heart
  - is there any sin or sinful attitudes that are short-circuiting you from having joy in your life?
  - sin breaks our relationship with God (Ps 51:12, 32:3-4)
  - all sin, whether an attitude or an action must be dealt with if you are going to have joy
- ❖ Misplaced confidence
  - don't put confidence in your background (Phil 3)
  - don't put confidence in yourself
  - don't put confidence in the work you do for Jesus
- ❖ Don't lose your joy when you are disciplined by your Father
  - discipline is a sign of God's love
  - Hebrews 12:11
  - don't mistake discipline with trials
    - discipline deals with sin
    - God designs trials to strengthen your faith and your character (1 Peter 1:6-7)

### Building Blocks For Growing Joy

- ❖ Remind yourself that joy is a fruit of the SPIRIT
  - the Holy Spirit uses His Word to create joy in your heart (Romans 15:13, 15:4)

- staying in the Scripture, keeping the Scriptures inside you, camping out on the promises of God are what the Holy Spirit uses to fuel joy inside of you

- ❖ Confess and forsake sin
  - confession leads to a recovery of joy (Psalms 51 & 32)
  - God's willingness to restore you to fellowship with Himself is a tremendous source of joy
- ❖ Keep a long-range view of life
- ❖ Learn **HOW** to give thanks **IN** (not **FOR**) all circumstances
- ❖ Know that God is pleased when you let His joy flow into and out through your life (Romans 14:17-18)

### Personal Reflection

1. On a scale of 0 to 5, how joyful are you? Why is that?
2. Is your connection with Jesus the source of joy in your life? How do you know this to be so?
3. What roadblocks are currently undermining your ability to experience the joy of Jesus and share that joy with others? Sin? Misplaced confidence? Discipline from the Lord? Trials?
4. What building blocks do you most need to make use of to increase joy in your life? Digging more deeply into the Word? Confession and forsaking sin? Keeping a long-range view of life? Giving thanks in all circumstances?.