

Be Joyful (11.12.17)

Big Idea: Regardless of our situations we are to be people characterized by Joy

Fallen Nature: There are lots of reasons not to be joyful. Joy or depression/ seems to be in response to interpreting the situation around us.

Desired Result: That we would be a more joyful people.

Intro: Joy may be described as a state of mind characterized by gladness or a sense of goodness.

Joy may be difficult for a small surviving church in Texas or a family from Puerto Rico, or a business owner from Houston... or an average American who looks at the news.

This morning I want to address finding joy while experiencing adversity.

Trans: How do we find joy in the midst of a reality that is depressing and dark? Where do we look?

What are sources of joy that do not depend on circumstances?

I. The Gospel Phil 1:4,5,18

Slide: Maybe a pic of broken chains or handcuffs

A. Partnership v5

1. Sent Epaphroditus - personal support

2. Sent gift - financial support

3. As a result of work of Holy Spirit work v 6 He began a good work and is

completing it

B. Proclamation v12-18

1. The whole palace guard has heard the gospel v12

2. Other brother have been encouraged to speak v14

3. Some speak out of envy v15

4. Most important thing - Christ is preached

5. v18b And I will continue to rejoice

Truth: Setting people free from the wages of sin to the freedom in Christ is exciting regardless of the circumstances.

Illus: Pastor will preach funeral sermons soon... maybe he will speak at the funeral of his own daughter. Someone will point out the contrast of light and darkness. Darkness stays dark. Light moves from light to glory.

Appli: The best thing about you is that you are free. You have a home prepared for you and you are deeply loved by one who will not protect you from suffering, but guarantees that He will walk with you as you suffer.

1. Celebrate often your own personal salvation

2. Participate in the salvation of others

3. Proclaim the gospel as well as you can.

II. Hope Phil 1:18b-21

Slide: Maybe person fishing

- A. Paul had hope that he would be physically delivered from his prison v20
- B. Paul was willing to die for Christ v21-23

Teach: There is joy in hope.

Illus: I might catch a fish... that would make me happy. I might sit here on a beautiful day and feel the sun and the wind on my skin and absorb something like tranquility and that is a win also.

So I am joyful no matter what happens, because either way Christ will win inside me.

Appli: Imagine how God may bring hope out of your own dark situation

Chronic pain - I have hope that I may be healed.

I have hope that I will experience the power of God in ways that allow me to understand more clearly the sufferings of Christ. (note 1:29)

III. Relationships 1:25-2:29

Slide: group of people sitting around a campfire (or a picnic table) the idea is to show good friends together.

- A. We bring joy to those we serve v1:25
- B. We bring joy when we are like minded v2:2
- C. We bring joy when we are humble (like Christ) v6-11
- D. We bring joy when we serve others :29

- 1. v17,18 Paul was being poured out in service
- 2. Epaphroditus nearly sacrificed his own life

Teach: There is joy in experiencing meaningful relationships

Illus: Chad - part of a winning football team - like family - made life really good

Appli: Serve someone

Join me today in moving wood

Join with someone - take the risk of a small group of people

IV. Choice 3:1-4:4

Slide: fork in the road

- A. Chose to rejoice in the face of challenge

1. From those who put confidence in the flesh
In Paul's situation - Jews who worked hard
 2. From stuff v7
Prestige
A righteousness from the law v9
- B. Chose to rejoice in the face of complacency v10
Paul wanted to know Jesus more than anything
- C. 4:4 Chose to rejoice In the face of conflict
1. Amongst one another v 2 - agree... I plead with you
 2. Within our own heads v8
 3. Within our environment v4:10-13

Teach: Sometimes joy is a matter of choice

Illus: Norm Wagner

Appli: You will have options choose joy