

Sermon Outline for FBC Dec.16th, 2018

The Joyful Kingdom

John 15:11

Good morning!

Today my message is entitled The Joyful Kingdom. This is the third advent Sunday, and our keyword is "Joy." I will be looking at God's kingdom of joyful people.

When you consider the thought of "Joy", you might think happiness. Unfortunately, happiness is a feeling, but joy is a state of being. You are not happy when things are bad, but you can still have joy in that time of trouble.

When Kaye and Lynne lit the third candle representing Joy, they read "Jesus anoints our hearts with the oil of gladness. We can live every day in the joy of the Lord. This is not a fleeting moment in time or a good day, but a forever time. Walking with Jesus is a time of joy."

In the Advent video - Mary and Elizabeth, *Luke 1:39-45* - we see that even the unborn can "leap for joy" in the presence of Jesus. We should be able to do even more leaping and rejoicing now because we know what Jesus did while here on earth.

John 15:11 NIV Jesus, talking to His disciples states:

11 *"I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."*

Now we need to go back to why we are in the Christmas season.

Luke 2:10-11 NIV

10 *But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.*

11 *Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord.*

"The Joyful Kingdom" bulletin insert from CBWC – Justice and Mercy Network gives us this look at the joy we share in Christ.

The joyfully celebrated birth of Jesus marks a new phase of God's kingdom plan, which was so central to Jesus's teaching. This kingdom proclaimed by Jesus reveals God's eternal plan of salvation and asserts God's sovereignty over all creation, while at the same time overturning false ideas that the kingdom is about gaining worldly power. Instead, Jesus tells us about a kingdom that is both now and not yet, fully and mysteriously spiritual and yet made real in our daily lives through justice and love. This is a kingdom where Jesus calls us to care for and defend the widows and orphans, the poor, the vulnerable. Jesus asks us to live out His righteousness in the world through love. Following Jesus, we enter into the pain and suffering of the world to bring the good news of Jesus Himself to the poor in spirit and body.

Colossians 1:9-14 NIV

9 *For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the spiritual wisdom and understanding.*

10 *And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,*

How do we live that way?

11 *being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience,*

12 *and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.*

And why do we live that way?

13 *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,*

14 *in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Reading that, and having had the opportunity to receive this gift from God called “Salvation”, we can decide to become part of the kingdom of God and be joyful.

Isaiah 51:11 NIV

11 *The ransomed of the Lord will return.*

They will enter Zion with singing;

everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness and joy will overtake them,

and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Notice in that verse, from the prophet Isaiah, we are told to be overtaken with gladness and joy and all our sorrow and sighing will flee. Do you feel like that today? Do you have the faith to be joyful in any situation?

Here are two more verses, this time from the Apostle Paul:

Acts 13:52 NIV

52 *And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.*

Romans 14:17 NIV

17 *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

See, joyful is not about what is happening to you. It is all about what you do with your circumstances.

In closing, I want to quote again from the CBWC bulletin insert “The Joyful Kingdom”.

As we enter into the world’s pain to offer the good news of Jesus in word and deed, let us remember to do so with gladness and rejoicing, with hearts full of encouragement and optimism, trusting that God will provide all we need to bring God’s love to the world. Let us be “*as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything*” (2 Corinthians 6:10)

Some ways we can be a light to the world around us, to show the “joy of the Lord” to those who do not know about it:

Encourage one another in doing God’s will gladly.

Practice thankfulness in all things.
Volunteer to meet a need in your community.
Smile more.
Offer words of blessing and encouragement rather than criticism.
Give generously of your money, time and talents
Seek to see Jesus in everyone.
Share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Bibliography:

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