

Unpacking the Preach

Date Sunday 20th December 2020
Sermon Title JOY
Bible Passage Matt 2:1-11 & Ps145:5-10

Introduction

Take time to read the passages again and reflect on the below questions:

- Are there any new or different things that the scriptures have spoken to you about?

Recapping the preach

- JOY can be experienced in how we endure trials and suffering, and also in our worship and adoration of Him whose JOY is our strength.
- Divine JOY isn't joy in the worldly sense (being happy, emotional pleasure).
- It is in receiving that gift of grace that is Jesus Christ the Son of God into our lives, identifying in his JOY of being at one with our Father God and the Holy Spirit.
- JOY cannot be experienced without suffering, this was true of Christ so it may be true of us.
- Father God does not find JOY in the agony of our suffering, but in the transformation of our lives through it, that we may become more and more like the Son.
- We have the JOY of the Lord in us as we look at creation and experience the power of His wonderful and awesome works.
- It is the Lord's JOY to be gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. His eternal punishment is set aside for the wicked.

• Questions for reflection

- No one takes our joy from us. We choose whether we will relinquish it because of a situation, person, or sin or whether we will cultivate and nurture it...Can you think of some ways that Satan seeks to steal your joy?
- As we can see in David's psalm, even through a turbulent life, Scripture's resounding theme (Jam 1:2-4; Rom 5:3-5; 1 Pet 4:13)

is that Disciples should experience abundant, overflowing joy...Who are three of the most joyful people that you know? What makes these people so joyful?

- Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, produced naturally in us as we abide in Christ...What are three of your greatest challenges for living a *daily* joyous life?
- David and the Magi show us that obedience in seeking the Lord is the gateway that opens the flood gates of joy to us...Share an instance in which obedience to God resulted in great joy.

• **Going Deeper**

“I witnessed the transformative power of Jesus my Lord, first-hand. I taught Christian pastors in India who were beaten, their families attacked because of Christ. They told me how their villages were experiencing persecution and joy. “We are seeing more people come to Christ with a new incident of burning a home or beating a poor old man. Joy has come upon our city.” I heard the words and bowed my head and asked, “Who is the real teacher here? O God grant me such joy!” (Dr M. A. Milton)

Let us be honest, we do not suffer much persecution here in the UK – does this kind of story allow us to think deeper about how we approach (or try to run from) any forms of persecution or suffering (not just physical attacks but any form)?

What should we be asking God to grant us?

Response

- Lord may I experience your joy.

Prayer pointers

- The Lords joy to be our strength
- Trust in Gods ways and not our own
- Believe the words of Jeremiah “I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” 29:11

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>