

JOHN

Stories Related To The Last Days Of Christ

March 10, 2019

I. Introduction

- A. **John 15:11-17** . . . “These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. [12] This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. [13] Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. [14] You are My friends **if** you do what I command you. [15] No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. [16] You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. [17] This I command you, that you love one another.”
- B. Prayer

II. The requisite for the joy of the Lord is the peace of God along with paying attention to and living according to God’s will and word.

- A. **John 15:11** . . . “These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, **AND THAT** your joy may be made full.”
1. In this statement, there are two vital truths and one implied truth that I want us to consider today.
 2. The two vital truths:
 - a. **First**, paying attention to and living according to the things Jesus said and taught is a requirement for having His joy in us and having our joy become a full and complete joy.
 - b. **Second**, the joy that Jesus gives is an inward joy – which means its presence and our experiencing it are never dependent on anything outside us, such as people or circumstances.
 3. The implied truth comes from the larger context of **John 14 & 15**. In **John 14:27**, Jesus said “**My peace** I give to you.” Here in **John 15:11**, Jesus says, “These things I have spoken to you so that **My joy** may be in you.”
 - a. The implied truth that I believe is important for us to see is that living in the peace of God is a requirement, or a pre-requisite for possessing and experiencing the joy of the Lord.
 - b. In other words, to experience the joy of the Lord in a full and complete way, we must come to the place of trusting God enough

to begin experiencing the inward peace of God regardless of the outward circumstances.

4. We will look at these three truths in the order that I stated them.
- B. Once again, the **first truth** is – paying attention to and living according to the things Jesus said and taught is a requirement for having His joy in us and having our joy become a full and complete joy.
1. This truth stands out because Jesus begins His statement about joy with the words, “**These things I have spoken to you SO THAT.**”
 - a. It is the two words, “**SO THAT,**” that tells us that the things Jesus said and taught prior to this statement are an essential requirement for having His joy in us and having our joy become full and complete.
 2. So let me give you an abbreviated reminder of what Jesus said and taught just prior to making this statement about having His joy in us and our joy being full and complete.
 - a. Once Jesus commands us to love each other (**John 13:34-35**).
 - b. Twice He exhorts us to trust Him instead of giving way to fear and anxiety (**John 14:1, 27**).
 - c. Three times Jesus tells us that those who love Him obey Him, which means loving God and obeying God are inseparable. But there is more, for Jesus goes on to say that when we love and obey Him, He gives us wonderful gifts – such as the HS and God dwelling in us.
 - d. Jesus says that He is the way, and the truth, and the life; and that no one comes to the Father but through Him (**John 14:6**).
 - e. In **John 14:31**, Jesus reminds us that He is the example we are to follow in loving God and keeping His commandments.
 - f. In **John 15:1-4**, Jesus says He is the vine, that is, He is our life source who enables us to bear fruit. And Jesus also said that God is the vine-dresser, that is, the One who prunes us so that we bear more fruit. Therefore, one of the wisest things we can do is to abide in the vine and cooperate with the vinedresser.
 - g. Jesus went on to say that abiding in Him and having His words abide in us opens the door to receiving what we ask for – and in so doing, we bring glory to God and verify we are His disciples (**John 15:7-9**).
 - h. And finally, in **John 15:9-11**, Jesus exhorts us to abide in His love, and He continues on to tell us that the way to abide in His love is to keep His commandments.

3. My purpose with this quick review is to confirm that Jesus' is stating an important, life-changing truth when He says, "**These things I have spoken to you SO THAT.**"
 - a. And that important truth is this: We must pay attention to and live according to the words and teachings of Jesus in order to get into the spiritual, mental, and emotional condition whereby we are able to have God's joy in us and have our joy become full and complete.
 - b. In other words, if you are not in the right condition, then you will have spiritually, mentally, and emotionally unhealthy and even ungodly ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving, along with ungodly fears, hopes, desires, and habits that will prevent you from being able to take hold of and experience God's indwelling joy, which in turn will prevent you from having a full and complete joy of your own.
 4. Therefore, paying attention to and living according to the Word of God is an essential requirement for having God's joy in you and having your joy become a full and complete joy.
- C. The **second** truth found in vs 11 is that the joy Jesus gives is an inward joy. Therefore, its presence in us and our experiencing it are never dependent on anything outside of us.
1. This is an important truth, because joy that is dependent on outside sources – such as people or circumstances – is fleeting in that it comes and goes depending on what is going on around us or happening to us. And the same is true when we depend on people and circumstances for happiness.
 2. But there is a far more sinister side to seeking joy and happiness in the people and circumstances of life.
 - a. You see, to have the joy that Jesus gives, and to have a joy of our own that is full and complete, **requires** living according to the teachings and commandments of God. This is why Jesus says, "**These things I have spoken to you SO THAT my joy may be in you.**"
 - b. However, looking for joy in the world around us and depending on people or circumstances to make us happy, **requires** stepping outside the boundaries of godliness and resorting to selfish and manipulative or other unloving means to obtain the joy and happiness we want.

3. In other words, joy and happiness that is dependent on outside sources is not only fleeting, they pull us into using selfish and sinful means to gain the joy and happiness we seek.
 - a. And when we resort to such means, even for the sake of gaining happiness and joy, we lose the very thing we seek.
 - b. For whatever seeming good selfishness and sin brings, it also and always brings suffering and loss – which in time turns our outwardly dependent joy and happiness into unhappiness, hurt, discouragement, feeling like a victim, resentment, bitterness, and anger – all things that suck the life out of whatever joy and happiness we had.
 4. Now you may be thinking that there is hardly any joy, if any at all, and mostly hard, unpleasant, and difficult work in having to comply with another demand from God just to get some measure of inward joy that you have only heard about but haven't really experienced.
 - a. After all, the world offers us numerous paths to joy and happiness that require far less work and are gained far more quickly than the joy God gives. However, this is foolish thinking.
 - b. You see, God's demands, God's commands, and God's teachings are not to make life harder, less joyful, or unhappy, but rather to make life easier and full of joy.
 - c. The reality is, it is **only** in doing what God says that we come into that condition of spiritual, mental, and emotional health whereby we are able to receive and continue to experience God's joy so that we enter into a joy of our own that is full and complete.
 5. Therefore, when we pay attention to and make it our sincere and intentional aim to live according to God's word, we will enter into the condition of godliness required to receive and continually experience the indwelling joy of the Lord.
- D. The third truth found in vs 11, which is an implied truth, comes from the larger context of **John 14 & 15**. In **John 14:27**, Jesus said "**My peace** I give to you." Here in **John 15:11**, Jesus says, "These things I have spoken to you so that **My joy** may be in you."
1. I believe John put Jesus' words about peace and joy in this order because this is the order required to receiving and experiencing the indwelling joy of the Lord.
 2. In other words, we must first come to the place of trusting God enough to experiencing the inward peace of God – regardless of the outward circumstances – in order to experience the joy of God.

3. Now you may be wondering why being in the spiritual condition to have the peace of God within is a requirement for having the joy of God within. Let me give you two reasons.
 - a. **First**, to have God's peace within you requires trusting in the goodness of God, the justice of God, and the love of God, so much so, that you no longer worry or fret in spite of what is going on around you or with you or being done to you.
 - (1) It is this kind of trust that convinces you that you are safe in God's hands, even when it seems God is absent or ignoring the situation or doing something other than what you think ought to be done.
 - (2) And it is the sense of being safe in God's hands that keeps His peace alive and well inside of you.
 - (3) In contrast, any degree of unbelief in the goodness and justice and love of God leads to turning away from God and God's word in order to take matters into your own hands and deal with the person or situation according to what you think is best.
 - (4) And since you have replaced God as the final one in charge of the outcome, you will not only resort to ungodly ways and means to obtain the outcome you want, you will also give way to anxiety, worry, and fear, which robs you of whatever God-given inner peace you may have had.
 - (5) And where there is no inward peace, there can be no inward joy – which means where there is no inward peace of God there will be no inward joy of the Lord.
 - b. The **second** reason you must have the peace of God within to receive and experience the inward joy of the Lord is because in order to have the peace of God within you must be content with what God is doing or allowing along with waiting patiently for God to act, and in His time, bring good out of the situation.
 - (1) Without this kind of contentment and patience, you cannot find joy, for there is no joy or happiness where there is discontentment and impatience – and especially so when you are discontent and impatient with God.
 - (2) In other words, there can be no joy in the Lord and no joy of the Lord in you when you are discontent and impatient with what God is doing or allowing.
4. Therefore, to have God-given, inward joy, you must have God-given inward peace.

- a. To have God-given inward peace, you must have contentment and patience with what God is doing or allowing.
- b. To have contentment and patience with what God is doing or allowing, you must trust that God is good, that all of His ways are just, and that His loving-kindness is everlasting – in spite of what is going on around you or with you or to you.
- c. To do other than this is to feed a spiritual, mental, and emotional environment within yourself that is unable to live in the peace of God and therefore unable to receive and experience the joy of the Lord.

III. Conclusion

- A. Today, we are celebrating communion, and we are doing this in remembrance of Jesus – who died and rose again on our behalf.
 1. I submit to you that most, if not all of us, eat the bread and drink the cup of communion with great confidence that what Jesus did in dying and rising from the dead, He did for us.
 2. And I submit to you that most, if not all of us, are equally confident in the atoning work of Jesus on our behalf so that we confidently look forward to eternity with God instead of eternity apart from God.
- B. As I pass out the bread and cup, what I am inviting you to consider is:
 1. In the same confident way you trust God for eternal life, as expressed in your eating this bread and drinking this cup, do you, and if not, will you trust God and His ways enough to experiencing the inward peace of God – regardless of the circumstances – so that in trusting Him you can come to that spiritual, mental, and emotional condition whereby you begin to experience the joy of God?
 2. It is true that such trust will require contentment and patience with what God is doing or allowing. Yet the same God who died for you to free you from the power and practice of sin is the God who empowers and sustains you so that you can be content and patient with Him – regardless of the circumstances.
 3. In other words, trusting God like this is something you can do. My question for you as you prepare to show your faith in God for salvation from eternal damnation by eating the bread and drinking the cup of communion is: Do you, and if not, will you trust God and His ways enough to experiencing the inward peace of God so that in trusting Him you can come to that spiritual, mental, and emotional condition whereby you begin to experience the joy of God?