

## “Rediscovering Joy” • Romans 5:9-11

If you are new, there is something I want you to know about Creekstone — want our community to be a **SAFE** place...

### READ: ROMANS 5:9-11

1. Did any of you watch #1 KY & Indiana b’ball game yesterday? win = euphoria; fans went berserk... others of us do that -- football - TD and dance around
2. But eventually the **joy wears off**...
3. The same thing can happen **spiritually**...
4. **What do we do when we lose our joy?** We try to find it somewhere. Just like we were created to worship - we will not worship nothing; we ALL worship something, or someone. *The same is true with joy.*
  - Financial gain
  - Appearance - myself, my spouse, my house...
  - Already mentioned sports
  - Getting married
  - Having children
  - My GPA
  - Being popular
  - Food
  - Order & Control
  - Material possession – *if I get it for Xmas, I will be contented/satisfied*
  - **Do you see a common denominator?** NOT EVIL IN THEMSELVES - the problem is that we make *good* things, *ultimate* things — we try to find our ultimate joy in them —> ***the joy wears off***
5. **Paul invites us to find our joy in God through the Gospel**
  - **Legal news** --- justified by the blood of Jesus - shows how serious my sin is — I was morally powerless, a sinner, an enemy —> *saved from the wrath to come*
  - **Personal news** --- reconciled
  - **Eternal news**
  - We have real, objective and eternal reasons to rejoice — ***will never fade*** (assurance)
6. So, **why do I lose my joy?**
  - I am fearful - live under the curse of the law rather than the gift of grace (this was the Galatian problem)
  - I am forgetful - get gospel amnesia
  - I lose my focus - ***I look to my lesser joys***
7. If any of you have ever played baseball, you remember the advice your coach gave you some- ***“Keep your eye on the ball”*** (tennis, golf - ping pong)
8. That’s what Paul is telling us here — **Col. 3:2**, ***“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”*** *On God and his Gospel*
9. **Question:** Is it possible to be so heavenly, theologically minded that I’m no earthy good? No, just the opposite. Why?
  - Able to **distinguish** btwn *ultimate* joys and *lesser* joys — so that if I lose the lesser joy, I still don’t lose my ultimate joy
  - Provides a **hopeful context** for experiencing sorrow, grief and suffering
  - **Romans 8:16-18**, ***“16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”***
10. **How can I rediscover my joy?**
  - Not a formula
  - It is faith **“energized”** -- ***“coming alive to the wonder of the gospel...”***
11. **This happened to Sarah Edwards... wife of Jonathan.**

From her journal, Jan. 20, 1742 -- “When I was alone, the words came to my mind with... power and sweetness, upon which I took the Bible, and read the words to the end of the chapter (Rom. 8)... They appeared to me with undoubted certainty as the words of God, and as words which God did pronounce concerning me... It strongly impressed on me how impossible it was for anything in heaven or earth, in this world or the future, ever to separate me from the love of God which was in Christ Jesus. I cannot find language to express how certain this appeared the everlasting mountains and hills were but shadows to it. My safety and happiness and eternal enjoyment of God’s [unchangeable] love seemed as durable and unchangeable as God Himself. Melted and overcome by the sweetness of this assurance, I fell into a great flow of tears and could not forbear weeping aloud. It appeared certain to me that God was my Father, and Christ my Lord and Savior, that He was mine and I His. Under a delightful sense of the immediate presence and love of God, these words seemed to come over and over in my mind, ‘My God, my all; my God, my all’. The presence of God was so near and so real that I seemed scarcely conscious of anything else.... The peace and happiness which I here upon felt was altogether inexpressible... I seemed to be lifted above earth and hell, out of the reach of everything here below, so that I could look on all the rage and enmity of men or devils with a kind of holy indifference and an undisturbed tranquility. At the same time, I felt compassion and love for all mankind, and deep abasement of soul, under a sense of my own unworthiness... I also felt myself more perfectly weaned from all things here below than ever before. The whole world, with all its enjoyments and all its troubles seemed to be nothing: My God was my all, my only portion.”

**12. This shows us what true joy is:**

- Not a fleeting emotion / not the absence of suffering (see Paul, who wrote Philippians, the letter of joy, from prison; or Jesus, who endured the cross for the joy set before him)
- Joy is the **deep sense of satisfaction** that I experience when I am fully convinced of God's *greatness*, *goodness* and *grace*

**13. What might happen if I re-discovered joy in God like that? How would I be affected?**

**At least FIVE things...**

- Probably experience more **peace** and less spiritual anxiety (spiritual anxiety and despair are the result of gospel amnesia)
- Probably a greater spirit of **thankfulness**, even for small things (a *negative complaining, critical spirit is a sure sign that I have lost my joy!*)
- My desire for **mission** might increase (I want others to know this joy)
- I might be more likely to pursue **reconciliation** with others (I would initiate, not wait for them to make the first move)
  - I go to confess my sin
  - I go to offer full and free forgiveness
- My experience of gathered **worship** probably would be affected (not just *attending* a service, but *celebrating the gospel together in his presence* — mindful of his greatness, goodness and grace)

**14. There is a game that I used to play with Ann Ferris and Schaeffer when they were really young... The Gold Nugget Game**

- **My treasure** - God / in view of the Gospel (*How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!*)
- **God's treasure** - me (Col. 3 - "chosen and dearly loved")

***Do you believe that? What if you did?***