

## Joy of Jesus

Always before we celebrate communion together, when a holy hush settles over our sanctuary, I breathe in the sacred silence. That moment of waiting, that collective holding of breath before we approach the table - it's more than just a liturgical pause. It's a glimpse into something eternal, something that has been happening since before time began. In that sacred silence, we're echoing the very heartbeat of God himself - the joyful, loving community of the Trinity who has been waiting to welcome us home.

This morning, I want us to explore how communion connects us to the most beautiful relationship in all existence - the eternal dance of love between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And Jesus' prayer in John 17 reveals that we're not just observers of this divine community, but we are invited as participants in it. Let's turn together to **John 17:20-26**, Jesus' High Priestly Prayer.

Listen carefully to these words, spoken just hours before his crucifixion: **"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me."**

Jesus isn't just praying for unity among believers - he's revealing the very nature of God himself. "Just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you." This isn't distant theology; this is Jesus pulling back the curtain on the most intimate relationship in the universe - the perfect, joyful, self-giving love that flows eternally between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



The Nature of the triune God exists as a community, a perfect community. Not competing with each other, but constantly giving to one another, delighting in each other, celebrating each other's glory. Picture this: The Father's joy is to give everything to the Son. The Son's delight is to honor the Father and share everything with the Spirit. The Spirit's passion is to glorify both Father and Son. It's an eternal dance of humility, generosity, and ever-increasing joy. There's no jealousy, no competition, no withholding - only perfect love flowing in perfect community.

Trinity isn't some abstract doctrine we memorize. This is the very heartbeat of reality! Before there were galaxies or atoms, before there was time or space, there was this - perfect community, perfect love, perfect joy. And here's the stunning truth: this same joy that flows between Father, Son, and Spirit is the joy we taste when we gather around the communion table.

Now here's where Jesus' prayer becomes personal. He doesn't just describe the Trinity's perfect community - he invites us into it. "That they also may be in us," he prays. Not just "with us" or "near us," but "in us." We're being invited into the very life of God.

This transforms everything about communion. We're not just remembering something Jesus did 2,000 years ago. We're not just participating in a beautiful ritual. We're actually being welcomed into the eternal feast that has been going on forever in the heart of God.

When Jesus says, "This is my body, broken for you," he's not just talking about the cross. He's talking about the way the Trinity has always worked - perfect self-giving, perfect sacrifice, perfect love. The Father gives the Son, the Son gives himself, the Spirit gives life. And now, through communion, we're invited to participate in that same spirit of giving and receiving.

The reverent silence you feel before communion is your heart recognizing that you're about to step into something holy, something eternal. You're about to taste the joy of the Trinity itself.

Let's practice this right now. In our communion liturgy, we begin with these ancient words:

**"The Lord be with you."**  
**"And also with you."**  
**"Lift up your hearts."**  
**"We lift them up to the Lord."**  
**"Let us give thanks to the Lord our God."**  
**"It is right to give our thanks and praise."**

Do you hear what's happening here? This isn't just call and response - it's the church learning to speak like the Trinity. "The Lord be with you" - that's the Father's heart toward us. "And also with you" - that's us learning to give back, to participate in the divine community's spirit of mutual blessing. "Lift up your hearts" - that's the invitation to join the eternal celebration that's always happening in God. "We lift them up to the Lord" - that's us accepting the invitation, stepping into the joy. Every time we speak these words, we're practicing what it means to live in Trinity community - giving and receiving, blessing and being blessed, lifting each other up in love.

Now I want you to think about that moment of anticipation again - that sacred silence before we receive the bread and cup. What if I told you that in that moment, you're experiencing something the Trinity has been feeling about you since before the world began?

The Father's anticipation as he watches you approach his table. The Son's joy as he prepares to meet you in the bread and wine. The Spirit's excitement as he prepares to fill you with divine life. The Father doesn't just tolerate us or put up with us. God delights in us the same way he delights in Jesus. That anticipation in your heart before communion is actually the Father's own anticipation, shared with you through the Spirit.

This is why communion is never routine, never ordinary. Every time we approach the table, we're stepping into the eternal moment where perfect love meets perfect love, where the Trinity's joy becomes our joy, where heaven touches earth.

When we actually receive the bread and cup together, something profound happens. We're not just individuals having private spiritual experiences. We're becoming the body of Christ, learning to live as a community that reflects the Trinity's own life.

"Take and eat, this is my body, broken for you." In those words, we hear the echo of the Trinity's eternal self-giving. The Father giving the Son, the Son giving his life, the Spirit giving us new birth. And now we learn to give ourselves to each other in the same way. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." This isn't just forgiveness - it's family. We're being adopted into the Trinity's own household, learning to love like they love, to give like they give, to find our joy in each other's joy.

But here's the beautiful challenge: communion doesn't end when we leave this sanctuary. The Trinity's community that we taste at the table is meant to flavor every moment of our lives. When you go to work tomorrow, you carry the Trinity's joy with you. When you encounter difficult people, you have the Trinity's patience. When you face challenges, you have the Trinity's strength. When you serve others, you're extending the same self-giving love that flows eternally between Father, Son, and Spirit.

This is what Jesus meant when he prayed "that they may be one even as we are one." He was talking about a way of living that reflects the Trinity's community in every relationship, every conversation, every act of service.

The anticipation you feel before communion should become the anticipation you feel about each new day - knowing that the Trinity goes with you, that their joy is your strength, that their community is your home.

So, as we come to the table this morning, remember you're not just receiving bread and wine. You're being welcomed into the eternal feast of the Trinity's love. You're tasting the joy that has been flowing between Father, Son, and Spirit since before time began. And you're being sent out to share that joy with a world that desperately needs to know they're invited to the feast too.

Let us come with reverent anticipation, knowing that perfect love is waiting to meet us here. Amen.