

The Hallmark of Joy

Joy is somewhat hard to define. We know it isn't exactly the same as happiness. The apostle James said to “consider it pure joy ... whenever you face trials of many kinds” (James 1:2). Trials or troubles don't, as a rule, produce happiness. Our Lord described the blessedness of those who are persecuted because of their commitment to him. He tells them, in fact, to rejoice and be glad! (Matthew 5:12).

So what is this joy we are supposed to have when people get on our case for being a Christian or when bad situations stretch our faith almost to the breaking point?

The Psalms give us a practical, working definition of joy. Joy is an outpouring of jubilant praise at the recognition of who God is, what he has done for his people and how he is faithful even in the midst of the roughest situations. Joy is a singing heart inspired by the unshakeable conviction that “we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care” (Psalm 95:7). We can rejoice in our circumstances because we know the outcome in advance. We know the testing of our faith produces perseverance in this life (James 1:3), and a crown of righteousness in the life to come (2 Timothy 4:8).

Joy ultimately requires a decision. We can choose to rejoice or we can choose not to. Paul chose to rejoice—to express his joy, in words of unmistakable confidence, that God's power was greater than man's effort to thwart the gospel. Some preached Christ out of sincere motives, others out of selfish ambition. Even worse, Paul was in jail, possibly on the verge of execution. “But what does it matter?” he wrote. “The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice” (Philippians 1:18).

What about you? Have you been conquered by your circumstances? No matter how bad things are, God is greater than your afflictions. But that won't be clear to you unless you obey the command to rejoice. “Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation” (Psalm 95:1).

The Joy of the LORD Is Your Strength

Nehemiah 8:10

Covenant Presbyterian Church
1623 University Avenue, Berkeley, California 94703
www.berkeleyopc.org

MORNING WORSHIP – 11:00 A.M.

THE LORD CALLS US TO HIMSELF

Salutation and Call to Worship

*Hymn of Praise # 515

“How Lovely Shines the Morning Star!”

*Invocation

*Hymn of Praise # 181

“We Come, O Christ, to You”

CONFESSION OF SIN AND THE LORD'S ASSURANCE

The Law of God

Matthew 22:37-40

Confession of Sin (Congregation in Unison)

O most great, most just and gracious God; thou are of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; but thou has promised mercy through Jesus Christ to all that repent and believe in him. We confess that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. We have neglected and abused thy holy worship. We have dealt unjustly and uncharitably with our neighbors. We have not sought first thy kingdom. We have run into temptation; and the sin that we should have hated, we have committed. Have mercy on us, most merciful Father! In thy Son is our salvation, in thy promises our hope.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Isaiah 1:18 “Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

OFFERING OURSELVES IN THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER

Worship in Giving

Hymn of Thanksgiving # 512

“I Lay My Sins on Jesus”

Worship in Prayer

Interlude

*Congregation Standing

We extend a cordial welcome to each visitor!

Wayne K. Forkner, Minister

510-928-8024

THE LORD FEEDS US FROM HIS WORD

*Hymn of Preparation # 191 *“I Am So Glad That Our Father in Heaven”*

Sermon Text

Luke 24:44-53

Sermon

MESSAGE, MISSION AND MEANS

*Hymn of Response # 604

“Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart”

THE LORD DISMISSES US WITH HIS BLESSING

*Gloria Patri (Praising our Gracious Lord)

734

*The Lord's Benediction

Announcements

Today, 10:00am. Adult Sunday School class. We are studying the book of Colossians.

Today, 12:30pm. A potluck luncheon will be held in the church. All are welcome.

Tuesday, 7:30pm. Weekly Bible Study at the church or via Zoom. We are beginning a study of the book of Deuteronomy. Our Bible study at the church begins with dinner at 7:00pm, followed by a time of study at 7:30pm. For information on attending the study via Zoom, please send an email to Pastor Wayne at wforkner86@mac.com.