

Longing for Joy

Longing for the King – Crossroads Advent 2009

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- Intro

○ **What is Longing?**

- Dictionary.com
 - strong, persistent desire or craving, esp. for something unattainable or distant
 - having or characterized by persistent or earnest desire

○ **What is Joy? What brings Joy?**

- Dictionary.com
 - the emotion of great delight or happiness caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying; keen pleasure; elation
 - a source or cause of keen pleasure or delight; something or someone greatly valued or appreciated
 - the expression or display of glad feeling; festive gaiety.
 - a state of happiness or felicity
- Alive.com: Happiness versus Joy
 - Happiness, according to the Oxford English dictionary, is based on luck or good fortune. Joy on the other hand, is described as a vivid emotion of pleasure. Thus, happiness depends on circumstance; joy, on our emotional well-being. ... At first glance, joy and happiness may seem similar but, really, they are quite different. We may be happy if we win the lottery, but we feel joy when we think about a beloved child or grandchild. Happiness may warm us, but it **is joy that creates the fierce heat of emotion that takes our breath away.**
- Answers.com
 - joy: sheer elation; a metaphoric oasis of peace and love; absolute sound knowledge that you are pleased beyond reason; knowing in a moment that nothing could be better than it.

- **Shout with Joy to the Lord**

○ **Psalm 98:4-9**

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth,
burst into jubilant song with music;
5 make music to the LORD with the harp,
with the harp and the sound of singing,
6 with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn—
shout for joy before the LORD, the King.

7 Let the sea resound, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it.

8 Let the rivers clap their hands,
let the mountains sing together for joy;
9 let them sing before the LORD,
for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples with equity.

○ **Psalm 33:1-3**

Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous;
it is fitting for the upright to praise him.

2 Praise the LORD with the harp;
make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.

3 Sing to him a new song;
4 play skillfully, and shout for joy.

○ **Psalm 95:1-7**

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.

3 For the LORD is the great God,
the great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.

5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

6 Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;
7 for he is our God

and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

- **Psalm 47**

Clap your hands, all you nations;
shout to God with cries of joy.

2 How awesome is the LORD Most High,
the great King over all the earth!

3 He subdued nations under us,
peoples under our feet.

4 He chose our inheritance for us,
the pride of Jacob, whom he loved. *Selah*

5 God has ascended amid shouts of joy,
the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.

7 For God is the King of all the earth;
sing to him a psalm of praise.

8 God reigns over the nations;
God is seated on his holy throne.

9 The nobles of the nations assemble
as the people of the God of Abraham,
for the kings of the earth belong to God;
he is greatly exalted.

- **Joy anchored in God's Word**

- **Nehemiah 4:8-10**

"The joy of the Lord is my strength."

- **Psalm 19:7-9**

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.

The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever.

The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous.

- **What is "The Joy of the Lord" and how do the "Commands of the Lord" give "Joy to the Heart?"**

- Longing for Future Joy

o **Jeremiah 31:7-14**

7 This is what the LORD says:

"Sing with joy for Jacob;
shout for the foremost of the nations.
Make your praises heard, and say,
'O LORD, save your people,
the remnant of Israel.'

8 See, I will bring them from the land of the north
and gather them from the ends of the earth.
Among them will be the blind and the lame,
expectant mothers and women in labor;
a great throng will return.

9 They will come with weeping;
they will pray as I bring them back.
I will lead them beside streams of water
on a level path where they will not stumble,
because I am Israel's father,
and Ephraim is my firstborn son.

10 "Hear the word of the LORD, O nations;
proclaim it in distant coastlands:
'He who scattered Israel will gather them
and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.'

11 For the LORD will ransom Jacob
and redeem them from the hand of those stronger than they.

12 **They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion;**
they will rejoice in the bounty of the LORD—
the grain, the new wine and the oil,
the young of the flocks and herds.
They will be like a well-watered garden,
and they will sorrow no more.

13 Then maidens will dance and be glad,
young men and old as well.
I will turn their mourning into gladness;
I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.

14 I will satisfy the priests with abundance,
and my people will be filled with my bounty,"
declares the LORD.

○ **Jeremiah 31:15-23**

- 15 This is what the LORD says:
"A voice is heard in Ramah,
mourning and great weeping,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because her children are no more."
- 16 This is what the LORD says:
"Restrain your voice from weeping
and your eyes from tears,
for your work will be rewarded,"
declares the LORD.
"They will return from the land of the enemy.
- 17 So there is hope for your future,"
declares the LORD.
"Your children will return to their own land.
- 18 "I have surely heard Ephraim's moaning:
'You disciplined me like an unruly calf,
and I have been disciplined.
Restore me, and I will return,
because you are the LORD my God.
- 19 After I strayed,
I repented;
after I came to understand,
I beat my breast.
I was ashamed and humiliated
because I bore the disgrace of my youth.'
- 20 Is not Ephraim my dear son,
the child in whom I delight?
Though I often speak against him,
I still remember him.
Therefore my heart yearns for him;
I have great compassion for him,"
declares the LORD.
- 21 "Set up road signs;
put up guideposts.
Take note of the highway,
the road that you take.
Return, O Virgin Israel,
return to your towns.

22 How long will you wander,
O unfaithful daughter?
The LORD will create a new thing on earth—
a woman will surround a man."

23 This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "When I bring them back from captivity, the people in the land of Judah and in its towns will once again use these words: 'The LORD bless you, O righteous dwelling, O sacred mountain.' 24 People will live together in Judah and all its towns—farmers and those who move about with their flocks. 25 I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint."

- God promises future joy to those currently in exile
- note: this new joy of the Lord comes to those weeping, morning...

- **Joy announced in Christ**

o **John the Baptist**

- Zechariah – he will be a joy to you
- Elizabeth – when Mary came, baby in womb leapt for joy

o **Luke 2:8-14**

8And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. **9**An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10**But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. **11**Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ^f the Lord. **12**This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, **14**"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

- **Matthew 2:10-12**

10When they (the Magi) saw the star, they were overjoyed. **11**On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. **12**And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

- **Joy indwells men in Holy Spirit**

- **Acts 8:4-8**

⁴ Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. ⁵ Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. ⁶ When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. ⁷ With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. ⁸ So there was great joy in that city.

- **Acts 13:52**

- And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit
- Context: getting kicked out the city!

- **Joy in Others**

- **Biggest surprise to me personally**

- **Paul over 30 references, Many like: I Thes. 2:19**

17But, brothers, when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you.

18For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan stopped us. **19**For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

20Indeed, **you are our glory and joy.**

- **Joy in others growing in Christ!**
 - **Phil. 4:1** - Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!
 - **Philemon 4-7** - ⁴ I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. ⁶ I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. ⁷ Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.
 - ...
- **Jesus** summarizes many of these thoughts in his prayer in **John 15:9-17**

9"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. **10**If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. **11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.** **12**My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. **13**Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. **14**You are my friends if you do what I command. **15**I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. **16**You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. **17**This is my command: Love each other.

- **Longing for Joy**

○ **Where are you looking for Joy?**

- Are you looking for it in Christ and in the Holy Spirit?
- Are you looking for it in the midst of suffering?
- Have you seen that deep, lasting joy comes not in ourselves or our pleasures, but in loving other deeply, giving your life for the kingdom by investing deeply in God's work in others?

○ **Are you Longing for Joy?**

- Is your experience of Christ "that fierce fire of emotion that takes your breath away"
- If it is not, is that what you desire, long for, search for more than anything else?
- Does that longing drive you to prayer, to Scriptures, to Christ? Does it drive you to others?

- **Doxologies of Joy**

○ **Romans 15:13**

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

○ **Jude 24-25**

²⁴ To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— ²⁵ to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

- **Light Second Candle – Mary**

- Luke 1:26-38, 46-56
- Music Video – "Mary Did You Know"