

The Joy Of The Lord...

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- [0 : 00] So if you have your Bibles with you, please open it and we're going to read from John chapter 3 from verse 22 to 30. So today I would like to speak about the joy of the Lord in the Lord's mission.
- The joy of the Lord in the Lord's mission. Let me ask you something.
- Two questions. When someone we love or you love is having a birthday party, we sometimes ask them what they need days before maybe so we can give them an important present or gift, right?
- Or if I ask here the young people, what do you need today?
- I have a couple of people here knowing that what I'm talking about. But what about the rest of us? Or even you, young people, old people, adults.
- [1 : 37] What do we really need personally? Because sometimes the things that we need when we have that, what do we have? Joy.
- And we enjoy that things. So what do we need personally? What do we really need now as families?
- What do we need? What do we need as Carloway Free Church? What do we need to continue living?
- What do we need? What do we need? And what should we long for to continue with our mission here in Carloway or in our families?
- In Lewis. Whatever we are or you are. And one of the things that we should recover, need, and long for every day is the joy of the Lord.
- [2 : 42] The joy of the Lord in every circumstance. And in what calls us today, we need to recover the joy of the Lord in the mission of the Lord.
- And when I speak about the joy of the Lord, I'm not talking about how big and bright the smile is. No, I'm not talking about that.
- I'm not talking about the expression of joy according to the culture you grew up in. If you are Latino or Scottish or American. No, I'm not talking about that.
- I'm talking about the joy of the Lord. That is the enjoyment produced by the Holy Spirit where He convinces us that our union and communion with Christ are real.
- That's the joy of the Lord. It is the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart when you are aware that you have a special union with the Creator of the universe.
- [3 : 49] And because of that, you have this communion with God. And because of that, we are faithful to our mission here on earth.
- Whatever, if you are P1, P5, or XS1, or thinking about uni. When we know about what the joy of the Lord is, we're going to be faithful to our mission here.
- So we need that joy in God's mission. So think about the life of Paul. We realize that he was someone who went from being a persecutor, a horrible persecutor of people, to being a proclaimer of the best message that we must preach to all kinds of people.

From a persecutor who supposedly knew about God, Paul became a proclaimer, who continually sought to know God and make God known.

From a persecutor to a proclaimer. We need good proclaimer here in Carlyway.

[5 : 06] Not just in Leith or in Edinburgh. But we need proclaimers who proclaim the Word of God. And because of that, Paul, from hating Christ and Christians, Paul started to love Christ and Christians.

And this was because of God's transforming grace. And that grace led him to be diligent in God's mission.

So when we hear about God's mission, what's that? When we think about God's mission, it is to expand this communion with God in the presence of God.

To expand that communion with God. To expand that communion with God in every area of your life. To expand that communion with God with your friends. With your colleagues.

With your pals. With your family. It is expanding. It is about expanding this communion with God in the presence of God.

[6 : 16] This means being sent by God. Sent by God. To do what? To enjoy God's presence.

Sent by God to enjoy and proclaim God and His works to us and others. So just as in the life of Paul, we can see another person who also was sent by God to enjoy and proclaim God and His works.

And that's what we see in the life of John the Baptist. So according to what we read in John chapter 3 from verse 22 to 30, we can see three points.

And these are going to be the three points of this sermon. The first one, the nature of the mission. The second point, obstacles in the mission.

And the third point, the purpose of the mission. So the first point, the nature of the mission.

[7 : 26] It's all about the glory of Jesus. The nature of the mission. It's all about the glory of Jesus. And now if you have your Bibles with you, please grab a physical Bible if you're able.

If not, you can use your phones. That's okay. Don't worry. I'm not judging. No, it's okay. So let's read some sections of John chapter 1. John chapter 1 from verse 6 to 8.

John 1 from verse 6 to 8. So the first thing we see is that the mission's focus is on Jesus.

Not on John. In other words, the mission is about Jesus, not about us. And by this, I don't mean that we should ignore ourselves.

No, I'm not talking about that. Or that we have to nullify our personalities. Quite the opposite. When Christ is the center of our lives, that is when our lives really begin to live.

[9 : 00] So because the mission is about Christ, that's where you personally, you with your personality, you, your heart begins to live.

If the mission is about Christ, then the proclamation, what comes out from our mouths, it's also centered on Christ, especially about the salvation that he gives.

Verse 29 from chapter 1. Now, verse 35 to 37.

Verse 37. The next day, again, John was standing with two of his disciples. And he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, Behold, the Lamb of God.

Again. Verse 37. The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Verse 40 from chapter 1.

[10 : 21] One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. Can you see the focus here?

This is not about John. This is about the Lamb of God. The focus was on one person in particular, Jesus.

The focus was on Jesus and his work, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. And this is important because we can see at least two things here.

One, the problem of sin. Sin. Sin was what destroyed the enjoyment and communion with God, resulting in spiritual death.

And second, the solution to the problem of sin. Because we are talking about the enjoyment, the joy of the Lord in God's mission.

[11 : 23] So why we are not joyful people? What's the root of that? The problem of sin. But now we have the solution for this problem.

And this is it. It was no longer about little animals that were offered year after year for the forgiveness of sins. Now a special lamb comes.

The lamb of God who is truly man and truly God. It is Jesus who takes away the sin not of one person, but of a multitude of people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

The solution to the worst problem in our lives or broken and rebellious hearts against God because of sin doesn't not come from us, but from God.

And these are the very good news. The solution for our problem comes from God.

[12 : 36] That's why the mission is about Jesus and not about John the Baptist. Behold. And I love that word because it's about centering your consciousness, your mind to something.

Behold. Behold. Focus your attention on Jesus. And what we have in our society today, outside, we have many voices saying to you, Behold this.

Behold that. Behold this here. Behold this on the news. Behold what's happening over there. Too many voices. And we said, what are we going to do?

And not just outside, but inside our heart, inside our minds. We have so many voices telling you, you're not doing things well.

You're not being a good mom. You're not being a good worker. You're not being good and this and that. And we have our minds with so many storms.

[13 : 51] But God's word said, behold. Behold. The Lamb of God. So the bigger our vision of this Lamb, the smaller we become.

And the bigger our vision of our Savior, the more secure those of us who are weak and small become. We are secure in Christ. So now John's preaching led disciples of John to become disciples of Christ.

As we read in verse 35 and 40. The next day again, John was standing with two of his disciples. And he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, Behold the Lamb of God.

Verse 37. The two disciples heard him say this and they followed Jesus. Again, John's missions were not centered on him. But on the Lamb who restores.

The Lamb who saves. John's life points to Christ because Christ came to him. And Christ was not a random person.

[14 : 59] But someone who was before John. Someone who is God himself. And this is the God that we have.

There is someone who has known you from your mother's womb. Before the foundation of the world. This is my second time here in Lewis.

And every time that I see the lochs and the hills. So beautiful. And the one who created all these things.

He knew me before the foundation of the world. And he loves you. Since when? Before the creation of that hill.

So every time that you see that hill. You can say and you can preach to your heart. And say, I have someone who loves me with an eternal love.

[16 : 04] Before the foundation of that loch and hill. And everything in the universe. And that person, Christ.

Loved me before the foundation of the world. That means that before the foundation of the world. You were in his heart. And because of that.

You embraced that Savior. Into your heart. That's the Christian life. The enjoyment. Of being in God's heart.

And God. Being in your heart. That's the Christian life. Therefore, if Christ has come into our life.

Then let us go and make disciples. Not disciples of ourselves. Not disciples of our agendas. But of Christ. Let us announce the kingdom of God.

[17 : 10] But not with envy. But with joy. Why? Because sadly. Mission can be hindered. When we become the center of attention.

Mission is hindered. When we seek the glory of man. And not of God. So that's why we can think about the second point. The first point.

The nature of the mission. It's all about the glory of Jesus. The second point. Obstacles in the mission. It's all about my glory. That's the main obstacle.

For making disciples. It's all about my glory. Chapter 3. From the gospel of John. Verse 22.

After this. Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside. Verse 25. Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples.

[18 : 07] And a Jew over purification. A discussion about purification. There were rules about purification.

But apparently. They were not looking to the one who truly purifies. And takes away sin. They were discussing about how can we have peace with God.

About rules. About purification. But John the Baptist was already preaching about the lamb who takes away the sin of the world. And they were discussing about this.

Verse 26. And this is where the drama begins. And they came to John and said to him. Rabbi. He who was with you across the Jordan.

To whom you bore witness. Look. He is baptizing. And all are going to him. An imperative.

[19 : 10] An order. A command to John. From his disciples. Look. If you are sleepy. Now.

Maybe John. I don't know. If he was sleeping. I don't know. But the disciples said. Hey John. Look. This is very important. It requires your full attention. What thing?

What is that I must look at? Maybe John. Perhaps. Ask himself. Rabbi. He who was with you across the Jordan. And to whom you bore witness.

Look. He is baptizing. And all are going to him. Can you see this? What things were in the hearts of John's disciples.

That did not understand the purpose of the mission. What they are so kind of troubled about this. People are going to Jesus. Jesus. So.

[20 : 15] What things were in their hearts? Envy. Jealousy. Competition. Numbers. Focus on John. And his disciples. People are moving from this place to another place.

Moving from being John's disciples to Jesus' disciples. People. These things prevent the mission from being a reality. And all are going to him.

What is the problem with going to Jesus? Our mission is to bring people to Jesus. That is what it's all about.

Seeing more and more people surrender to Christ. And not to our plans. It's about being instruments in the hands of God. It's about being people.

With different and unique personalities. That lead others to Christ. It's not about our charisma. But about the deep love of Christ for all of us.

[21 : 23] Verse 28. You yourself bear me witness. That I said. I am not the Christ. But I have been sent before him. It is like John saying.

If you know that I am not the Christ. Rejoice. That people are going to Christ. Envy. Jealousy.

And competition. Reveal. One single thing. But we are not satisfied. It seems that we are hearing about Jesus.

But we are not delighting in Christ. And when the unsatisfied heart is not satisfied with Christ.

What happens? The ground rots with bitterness. Envy. Jealousy. And this kind of discussion. So let me ask you this.

[22 : 28] Who is the center. Of our conversations. Who is the center. Think about.

The intention. The spirit of our conversations. That we have with each other. Are they mainly focused on. I don't know.

Things that bring conflict. Maybe. Or they are focused on the glory of Christ. When you went back.

When you go back. To your houses. What is the. The marrow. The heart of your conversations.

Of course we can talk about. During the week. I don't know. Football. And sports. And the things that you like. But do we have the salt.

[23 : 33] Are our conversations. Centered. With the say. The aroma. Of Christ. That's the only question. When we are planning about things in the future.

For this congregation. For your family. It is Christ. The center of that. It is the glory of Christ. Or maybe our plans. Or agendas. I don't know.

Who can restore us. Who can restore the meaning. And purpose of the mission. So that's why. Let me finish with the third point. The purpose of the mission.

It's. And please. Listen. The purpose of the mission. It's all about. The joy. Of Jesus.

And. In Jesus. It's all. What's the purpose of all this. Why you. Young guys. People.

[24 : 32] Friends. Are here. This Sunday evening. Why you're not playing. PS5. Or Xbox games.

At this very moment. Why you're here. Why you adults. You are not. Like. I don't know. Walking. Or doing something else. Why we are here. What's the purpose of all.

Of this mission. Let me just say this. It's all about. The joy of Jesus. And in Jesus. Verse 27.

From chapter 3. John answered. A person cannot receive. Even one thing. Unless. It is given him. From heaven. You yourselves. Bear me witness. That I said.

I'm not the Christ. But I have. Been sent. Before him. The one who. Verse 29. This is very important. For the mission. The one. Who has the bride.

[25 : 30] Is the bridegroom. The friend. Of the bridegroom. Who stands. And hears him. Rejoices. Greatly. At the bridegroom's. Voice.

Therefore. This joy. Of mine. Is now. Complete. He must. Increased. But I.

Must. Decrease. I remember. That I was a. Young lad. Young boy. And I memorized. This verse.

Maybe some of you. He must increase. But I must decrease. I memorized it. In Spanish. But I forgot. The previous verse. That in order.

To. Decrease. Something. Must. Increase. In my life. And that is. The joy.

[26 : 24] Of the Lord. The mission. Is about. Experiencing. God's love. It is about. The steadfast. Love. Of a holy. And infinite.

God. Pouring. Into the hearts. Of broken. And finite. People. People. Can you see that? The mission.

Is about. Experiencing. This. What? The steadfast. Love. Of a holy. And. Infinite. God. Being.

Pour. Into the heart. Of broken. And finite. People. And that's. The gospel. Mission. Is about. Celebration.

It's about. Joy. It's about. Union. And communion. It's about.

[27 : 17] A covenant. Relationship. Between. Christ. The one. Who comes. From above. To have. A relationship. With those. Who are. In darkness. Here. Below. God's.

Mission. It's about. Celebrating. God's. Love. The celebration. Of being. Loved. By God. And responding. In loving. God. With all. That we are. It's a celebration.

Have you. Experienced. That joy. In your life. Or maybe. You're here. Because. I don't know. Your parents. Brought you here. Or maybe.

Because. This is what you do. Every Sunday. Evening. Or. This is about. The joy. Of the Lord. In your heart. Again. Maybe.

Some of us. Experienced this. Many years ago. A couple of decades ago. Maybe. Do you remember that? Do you remember those moments.

[28 : 19] Where you were with your Savior. In close communion. Enjoying his presence. But what about today? Dear brothers and sisters.

What about today? Where is that joy? You don't need the joy. Of a PS5. Or just of a nice walk outside.

Or having a good barbecue. In a summer day. Of course that. Having a barbecue. In a summer day. Brings a lot of joy. I can tell you that.

Someone coming from Chile. I do enjoy. Barbecues. With friends. And that brings joy. Barbecues. But barbecue. Barbecues.

Ends. When all people eat all the steaks. But the joy of the Lord. Never ends. It's always full satisfying.

[29 : 14] For your heart. And that. Is what we need. To continue. Our mission. Here. In Carly. It's not about numbers. It's not about personalities.

It is about the glory of Christ. In every heart. Of every member. Of this church. It's about being with Christ. Because.

This is what John. This is what he said. John was not the bridegroom. But the bridegroom's friend. Now think about. Look at John's position here. A position that we should share.

John was with the groom. He was close to him. He was his friend. That was his position.

John was with Christ. That's why he was preaching about Christ. And that's why he wasn't worried about people.

[30 : 15] Moving from. Being his disciples. And becoming Jesus' disciples. John was with Christ. We are in Christ.

That's our identity. It's not being the best student. It's not about being the best dad or mom.

It's about the person and glory of Christ. It's not about our failures. It's about. The love of Christ.

For you. In you. So let me ask you this. Where are you? And maybe you can say.

But Israel. Have you not seen me? I am here. I'm seated here. No, I'm not asking you. Where you are. I'm asking. Where you are. Where is your heart.

[31 : 17] Today. Who is the most important person in your life? It is Christ or the things that are going. Think about this.

It is Christ or the things that we are going. That are we yearning. That are going to shape your understanding of your mission and vocation.

Being with Christ leads you to hear the voice of Christ. This is what John says. The friend of the bridegroom who stands and hears him rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice.

Therefore, this joy of mine is now complete. The closer we are to someone, the better we listen to them.

The closer we are to someone, the better we listen to that person. Now, this is about listening carefully. Why?

[32 : 22] Because it is not just any voice. It is the voice of the bridegroom. A voice full of love. It is the voice of the good shepherd.

The Lord is my shepherd. It is the supreme voice of the living God in all hearts. And this is why we need to listen to God's word. The voice of Christ.

Because, again, we are surrounded outside and inside with so many voices. Accusation. Ideas that bring desperation.

You know what are the things that are going on right now in your heart. So that's why we need to listen to Christ. And I know that Reverend Thomas Davids, he loves things about mathematics and engineer things.

So this is for Thomas and all the congregation here. This is a formula about rejoicing. One plus one equals two. So being with Christ plus listening to Christ equals rejoicing.

[33 : 31] Being with Christ plus listening to Christ equals rejoicing. This is key to understanding the purpose of the mission, to live in the mission.

This is essential to enjoying the mission here in Lewis, in Carlyway, and in Scotland. This is key to enjoying being part of this community, of the body of Christ.

This is essential to enjoying even when things are difficult. This is key to uprooting pride, envy, bitterness, and all dryness of lifeless religiosity.

It is enjoying, listen to this, it is enjoying the joy of Jesus and in Jesus. Jesus rejoices in saving you.

When? Today. Did you hear that? Jesus, the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus rejoices in saving you today.

[34 : 45] Today. From the pit. Being with Christ plus listening to Christ equals rejoicing.

Verse 29. I'm finishing now. The friend of the bridegroom who stands and hears him rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice.

Did you read that? Rejoices greatly. In the original, it's kind of rejoice with joy.

Rejoice with joy. It's like being conscious that you are enjoying something and because of that, you really enjoy that.

Therefore, dear church, the joy of the Lord is your strength. I invite you to listen and enjoy together the most beautiful voice in the universe.

[35 : 50] The voice of the one who said, let there be light, is the voice that tells us today, I have loved you with an everlasting love. Therefore, I have continued my faithfulness to you.

The voice of the good shepherd is the light that destroys all the darkness that torments our minds. So that's why I invite you to spend more time with Christ today and in this time of rest, summer holidays.

Be hungrier for Christ. Be with preaching of the word and the sacraments. Let us take the most of every Sunday to learn more about Christ through communion with one another.

By inviting us to our houses to spend time together. Maybe just a cup of tea or coffee. You know.

But let's spend time with each other to know more about Christ and what Christ is doing in others' life.

[37 : 01] Many times we pray, oh God, please help me. What if God uses the person who is next to you to help you?

What if the Lord brings consolation to your life to the person who is next to you? And at the same time, you receive consolation to give consolation to others.

What if you receive the joy of the Lord in other hearts and then you can give and receive. And because you receive, you can give. Because we give what we have in our hearts.

We speak, sorry, about what we have in our hearts. About the abundance. What we have in our hearts. So the fruit of this will be that everything will really be about the glory of Christ.

And not our glory. It's about God's mission. He must increase. But I must increase. May Christ grow more and more in this community.

[38 : 09] May the joy of the Lord be restored in our lives. When? Today. Literally. Literally. Today.

Let's pray. Father God, we come to you. And again, we bring all that we are. All that we have.

Because this is what you want. All that we are. All that we have. And this is what we need today. Your voice. To listen to your voice.

Who speaks louder than the storms outside and inside. Oh, Spirit of the living God.

May the voice of Christ be so clear in every heart today. Knowing that with an everlasting love, you have loved us.

[39 : 11] And because of that, we have the joy of the Lord. May you bring restoration, strength, comfort, enjoyment to this community.

Today and all the years ahead. In Jesus' name we pray and for his glory alone. Amen.