

TRIUMPHANT LIVING
Union With Christ – Part 10
“Rejoicing in the Lord”
Taught by Don Mauer
July 26, 2013

For the person who got up at four in the morning, I hope I make it worth your time, worth your while. Thank you for the privilege of being here. It’s a great responsibility as well. I’ve already talked to a couple of you, and there are a couple more...I’m going to ask, periodically, people to read Scripture. Also, I do think a little bit different than Bruce does, I like feedback, so I may ask a couple of questions here and there. Any comments, obviously, are more than welcome.

Let’s come before the throne of grace. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is your Name in all the earth. Father, when we consider the work for your hands, indeed, who are we that you are mindful of us, that you care for us. And yet, Father, not only are you mindful of us, and not only do you care for us, but in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are your adopted sons. Not by merit, but by your grace, and by your grace alone. Father, we thank you that you don’t just love us like you love the world, with material blessings, the sun to shine on us and the rain to come, but Father, infinitely more; that you have adopted us through the Lord Jesus Christ and we are no longer your enemies, but we are your sons, destined for glory. We thank you. We praise you. Father, I pray that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, that it would be acceptable to you, oh Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer. If there is anything, Lord, that is said that is not of you, father, I pray that you would nullify it and that only your pure Word of Truth may remain. I ask this in Jesus’ Name. Amen!

Bruce, a couple of weeks ago, asked me to preach on the very interesting and broad topic of rejoicing. He asked me first about rejoicing in tribulation, but then he narrowed it down to just the subject of rejoicing. I’ve titled your lesson on your handout...I assume you have them...Rejoicing in the Lord.

For our springboard, though I’m not going to preach or teach on the whole passage, I wanted to read Philippians 4:4-9 for us, concentrating on the first verse there, Philippians 4:4. As you listen, please realize that this is nothing less than the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of the Living God.

“⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand. ⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.” (NKJV)

This is the Word of the Lord.

Audience Members: Thanks be to God.

Okay, we have the injunction in verse four of Philippians 4, “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” This is going to be the theme of our talk this morning. I want to try to break that down a little bit later. Nevertheless, look at what it says here. We are to rejoice in the Lord. Always. This is something

we're only able to do by the grace of God. It's a tall order, a tall task. But it's a command, not a suggestion.

As if to emphasize the point, which happens frequently in Scripture, the Apostle Paul repeats this. I think of another time he did this in Galatians 1. Remember that...usually, in his letters, what does he do? He gives a benediction and then he commends the people and he mentions them his prayers, and praises them for the good things that he sees in them. He didn't do that in the epistle of Galatians. He says, "I marvel that you're so soon removed from the Gospel." Then he says, "If anyone, even an angel from heaven, preaches another Gospel other than the one that I preached to you, let him be an anathema. Let him be a curse. Let him be damned," and then he says again, "Again I say to you, as I said before, so I say again, if anyone preaches another Gospel, let him be an anathema."

He does this here, too. "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" He emphasizes this. It's something of utmost importance. Now, notice, he says, "always." Not just sometimes. Not just when we feel like it, or when circumstances or what we want them to be. Brothers, whenever I teach you, keep in mind I teach myself a hundred fold. No question about that. After all, where did Paul write this? He didn't write this from a comfortable house or a mansion. He wrote it from prison. In 2 Corinthians he said he was in prison three times. Well this was one of his prison epistles. It's not the kind of prison we have today where you get three square meals and cable TV. It's a dark, stinking, dungeon with feet fastened in the stocks. Hardly any food. Hardly any water. Alone a lot of the time. But it was in this Philippian jail, if you recall correctly, in Acts 16, that he and his fellow inmates were singing hymns after the earthquake resulted. God used that to convert the Philippian jailer and his family. So Paul there was practicing what he preached. He was rejoicing in the Lord.

Now, granted, we're commanded to rejoice in the Lord, but I want to ask you a question. It's on your handout. What is the difference between joy, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and happiness or pleasure? What's the difference between the joy of the Lord, which Jesus wants for us, incidentally...he said it in his high priestly prayer, "these things I write that your joy may be complete." What's the difference between joy and what the world, and what we experience, would call happiness?

Audience Member: *Happiness is temporary and dependent upon circumstances [UNCLEAR]. Joy is from the Lord.*

Ah ha! Yes. Okay. Good. Anybody else have anything to say there? What's the difference between the happiness that we have and the joy of the Lord?

Audience Member: *Happiness fleeting and joy is eternal.*

Ah ha! Yes. The joy, of course, can be experienced even when we're not happy, even when things are going badly for us. Right? The joy of the Lord. I believe it was Zephaniah who said, "The joy of the Lord is my strength." We'll be elaborating on that in a few minutes.

Tom: *I'd say happiness is based upon how you feel; joy is based upon what you know through faith.*

Yes. That's a crucial difference, isn't it? We're going to be talking about that later on when we talk about rejoicing in our tribulations and our suffering. That's a very good point. There are people who can experience joy in communist China or when experiencing unbelievable pain and agony. Of course, we'll be talking about that later.

Now, joy and rejoicing in the Lord is not just a New Testament concept. It's found in the Old Testament as well. Maybe what I should have put there also is the joy of worship. I asked Sig, could you read Psalm 33:1 for us, please.

Sig: *"Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him." (NIV)*

Ah ha!

Sig: *That's the NIV version.*

Okay. Good. The version that I have, which is New King James, says, "For praise from the upright and beautiful." I think, either way, it works. We can rejoice. Being in Christ, we can rejoice that we are righteous. We are righteous. You, really, positionally, are no more righteous now than you will be in glory. You're no more righteous in glory that you will be now. Can you fathom that? As a good friend of mine used to say, "Can you stand it?"

We are clothed with nothing less than the righteousness of Christ. That is a glorious thing to rejoice in. "Rejoice in the Lord, oh you righteous." Really, it's only we who are righteous who have the right and the privilege and the ability to rejoice in the Lord.

We have the righteousness of Christ. And you know what? It says that it is fitting for the upright to praise him, "Praise from the upright is beautiful." Do you know that God, because of you being in Christ, regards, and not only regards, but delights in your praise to him? Because of your standing in Christ? The book of Revelation says, "The prayers of the saints are a sweet aroma," a sweet fragrance, "to God."

How do you rejoice in the Lord? You praise him. The Westminster shorter catechism says that we're to glorify God and enjoy him forever. Yes, we are to fear him. Yes, we are. That's lacking in much of the church today. But not only do we fear him, but we are to enjoy him, to delight in coming to him, as Jesus delights in hearing our prayers and us coming to him and sharing all of our experiences with him, and pouring out our hearts to him. It's a great thing. Doesn't that talk about the importance of worship? The importance not only of confessing our sins and thanking God for what we have and pouring out our petitions to him, which we do quite a bit, but praising him. Part of rejoicing in the Lord is praising him, engaging in praise. It's a beautiful, beautiful thing. God delights in it.

Here's something interesting. Part of rejoicing in the Lord is that we are to rejoice that our names are written in heaven. Mike would you read Luke 10:20 please.

Mike: *"Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*

Of course, many of you probably are familiar with this setting. What happens is the Lord sends 70—or 72 depending on your translation and the manuscripts that are used—out, besides the apostles, to do his work. He gives them supernatural powers to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to cast out demons. Of course, they have quite an adventure. What happens? They come back, "Oh Lord, this is fantastic! Even the demons are subject to us in your name!" What does Jesus say? He doesn't discount their joy. He says, "I saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven," probably referring to the primeval time when Satan and a third of the angels fell, and when Lucifer became the devil and the other angels became demons. That must have been quite a thing to behold. Then he says, "And indeed, I've given you power to

trample on snakes and scorpions and nothing will hurt you.” They were able to do some pretty fantastic things.

But then he says, “Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the demons are subject to you,” marvelous and unbelievable as that may be. I mean, can you imagine? Can you imagine experiencing that? Where you encounter someone who is demon possessed? I don’t know what that might have been like. I’ve seen things on TV. I kind of wonder whether they’re legit or not, by any way, people foaming at the mouth or screaming or foreign voices, but whatever, and they cast them out. That must have been fantastic. But Jesus said, “Don’t rejoice in that. But rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” That’s what we’re supposed to rejoice in. Because of your union with Christ, rejoice that your names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

Rejoice that no matter what you’re going through today, no matter what trials you’re going through—whether it might be the petty thing of a boss who’s giving you trouble or that road rage you experience, or much, much more serious things like cancer or job loss or whatever it may be—that your names, if you are in Christ, are written in heaven and will never be erased. They’re written in the Lamb’s Book of Life—slain from the foundation of the world.

Jesus said, “He who comes to me, I will never cast out.” He doesn’t say, “Well I’ll cast you out if you commit a particular sin,” or whatever. No, he says, “I will never cast you out.” Jesus said that those who come to him shall never perish, because nobody can separate us from his or the Father’s hand. Nothing can separate us. Nothing in all creation, Paul says, can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus.

Now if this is not cause for rejoicing in the Lord, then I don’t know what can be—that our names are written in heaven. Any thoughts of questions before I go on?

Sig: *So Jesus was commenting that that’s a bigger deal than having these powerful demons, or what seemed to be powerful demons, submit to them. They must have thought that was pretty cool that they could exercise a demon, so to speak.*

Oh yea! That’s what Christ is saying, Sig.

Sig: *He’s not saying...this isn’t your topic, I know, but the quote you made from Luke 10, Jesus didn’t see that happen, the angels falling from heaven at the same time that the disciples cast our Spirits.*

I would say no.

Sig: *Those are two different events and [UNCLEAR]...*

I believe they are. Yes.

Sig: *If he said that to me, I’d be a little like, “What are you talking about?”*

Well sure. Sure, it’s a natural reaction, isn’t it? Because these things are spectacular. At least I have not experienced anything like that. These things are absolutely spectacular. It reminds me of on the Mount of Transfiguration when the apostles see Moses and Elijah, “Oh my goodness! This is great!” Peter said, “Lord, why don’t we build three tabernacles for you—one for Moses, one for you and one for Elijah.” Then they look up and they only see Jesus. I am reading into this a little bit, perhaps, but there’s

something here, really, we want the sensational sometimes, don't we. We're not content with Jesus is here; Jesus is here amongst us, and that's all that we need. It's the same kind of thing here. Rejoice that your names are written in heaven. That's the biggest deal of all. Rejoice in your salvation. That's even a bigger deal than any of these spiritual gifts that they got or that we may have.

Audience Member: *The rejoicing, I mean, like Sig was saying, this is a great thing. They're casting our spirits, and Christ said, "Don't discount the circumstances, but remember where you get that power from. It's from me."*

Absolutely.

Don: *The connection in heaven because your name is there and you're always plugged in, and you'll never be [UNCLEAR].*

Exactly. Good point, Don. He's not saying discount the circumstances, or discount these things, but rejoice even more that your names are written in heaven.

Audience Member: *Is it worth of note that in the English language there's an opposite for happiness but not an opposite for joy?*

Interesting. I think sometimes we use that, we use or language as if it were like...I think in one of our hymns, one of our resurrection hymns, it says joy from sadness or something. You make a good point. You make a good point.

Sig: *It's curious, too, if you play off of what you just said, the founding fathers said that we should have life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I thought these were Christian men, Don. What's their problem?*

Ummm...some of them were. I'm not sure about all of them. Thomas Jefferson...

Sig: *I'm making [UNCLEAR] life, liberty and the pursuit of joy.*

Ah! Don't know, Sig. You'll have to ask them someday. {LAUGHTER} You can't wash your dishes with happiness, can you? {LAUGHTER} Alright, moving on.

Bishop Rodgers: *I'd like just to say sometimes the word happiness is used to refer to joy. Saint Augustine said, "No man can be truly happy whose chief good can be taken away from him." He's really talking about salvation.*

Oh yeah. Right.

Bishop Rodgers: *While the Bible makes distinction, sometimes in our use of common language, we include joy in the category of happiness.*

Exactly. But it's just that in these passages that we were going over...

Audience Member: *Thanks for defending the founding fathers.*

These passages we're going over, I mean, after all, Jesus, the night before his crucifixion spoke of joy, "My joy, Father, I want my joy," and what was going to happen to him? The very opposite of what we would think would make someone joyful or happy. Right? Joy transcends happiness as we use it in our culture.

Audience Member: *Don, one other thing. It seems like the world today always talks more about happiness. Are you happy? They hardly ever refer to the word joy. Joy doesn't come out. You don't say, "Are you joyful today?"*

That's right. That's exactly right. Sure. Does your job make you happy? Does your wife make you happy? Whatever. Sure. Exactly right. Good point. Now, here's something...

Audience Member: *In regard to the founding fathers...I was just reading recently that Jefferson referred to Lot, learned from Lot, and they were considering the word property [UNCLEAR] property, that he took happiness, and happiness was interpreted by Jefferson as doing good.*

Okay. Well...thank you.

Audience Member: *[UNCLEAR] goes back to what Bishop said?*

I guess. Yeah. I guess so...Augustine's quote. Let's go on here. There are a couple of other things I did want to get to. I don't mean to be rude. We are to rejoice in our tribulations and sufferings. Now if there is anything that we can do only by the grace of God, it's that. Tom, would you read Romans 5:3-5 for us.

Tom: *"³And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."*

Okay. Bill, would you read the next Scripture there, because they're kind of interrelated, the 2 Corinthians Scripture.

Bill: *"⁷And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. ⁸Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:7-10 NKJV)*

Okay, there's a whole bunch here. How about we go until 8:00? No, just kidding. Wow! Here we go. Paul says, "I glory." We can glory in our tribulations. He says further, "that I delight, I take pleasure in all of these things—calamities, distress, persecution." What's going on here? Is Paul a masochist or something? What's going on here? How can we not only put up...it doesn't say just put up with them, or whatever...but take pleasure in these things? Glory in our tribulations?

Audience Member: *It takes you back to Luke 10:20. He knew the source of his joy, and so the discomforts of this world don't bother him. He can walk through them as the children of Israel walked through the Red Sea, because God opened it up and showed them the dry land. So there's dry land. Joy*

is forever. As Tom said, it's eternal; it's gift from God, and it's forever. The circumstances go away. We had a bad storm the other day. Is it here now? There's sunshine now. God brings it on. And he says, how's it go, that tears fall at night, but joy comes in the morning. So look ahead and quit looking at your circumstances.

Amen!

Audience Member: *In the desert, when the scorpions, and whatever, the fiery serpents came, what did God tell Moses to tell them? Look up to the top of that brazen serpent, to look up to Christ, to quit looking at your circumstances and look up to Christ and see the source of the joy that will come upon you.*

Amen! Tribulation produces perseverance, perseverance produces character, and character produces hope. Now this isn't some kind of vague hope so kind of hope. I hoped that the Pirates would win yesterday...

Sig: *Yeah, me too!!*

And they did not. That first inning...if it hadn't been for the first inning, they would have. Dick, I'm eating my words, because Dick and I had a conversation about that yesterday. But anyway, we did, we do hope for things, "Well I hope I get that raise," or whatever. That kind of hope, we don't know if those things are going to happen. But this hope is a certainty, isn't it. It's a certain reality based on the objective truth of the Word of God. There's a subjective element, too. We experience the love of God being poured out into our hearts because of the Holy Spirit. No matter what you're going through, you know that you have the certainty, that Christ said, "Our names are written in heaven." That's for sure.

Of course, we have the setting with Paul—experiencing things that we only wish we could have experienced—being caught up to the third heaven, seeing that's that he wasn't permitted to tell anyone, the surpassing glory of God. And yet, a messenger of Satan was given to him, the thorn in the flesh.

So many people have all kinds of ideas what it was. Some people thought it might have been his eye ailment the he mentions in other letters, maybe another illness or something. Some people even think it was a sin that he had to struggle with. Don't know what it was, but it was very bothersome to him. What does he do? As we all should do, he pleaded with the Lord three times that it be taken away. But what did the Lord say? "My grace is sufficient for you. For my strength is made perfect in weakness."

If there's anything that we men don't want to be, it's weak. Right? We don't want to be weak. We want to be macho—at least some people do. It's interesting that Jay Adams said that Jesus was neither a mucho-macho nor a casper milk toast. He was the perfect man. King David—strong, a warrior—yet also wrote the poetry that we know as the Psalms. Could we, at the death of his beloved friend Jonathan and Saul, etc.?

Our strength is made perfect in weakness. Paul says, "So most gladly then will I boast in my infirmities," whatever they may be. How is it possible...this is contrary to the prosperity gospel that we hear sometimes on so-called Christian TV—name it and claim it, blab it and grab it, that kind of thing. What's the keyword in this passage? For Christ's sake. Right.

Unfortunately, in our society, that expression is used as profanity. But there is a profound truth here. We go through these things and we can even rejoice in these things. Why? For Christ's sake. For the sake of Christ. Nobody likes pain, least of all me. I'm a baby when it comes to pain; although I haven't had a lot of it. But when it comes I don't like it. Of course, in this country, not only don't we like pain, we don't like inconvenience either. The remote doesn't work. The computer doesn't work. Whatever.

Paul, indeed, does talk about that we are able, by God's grace, to rejoice in these. How is it possible for someone like Joni Eareckson Tada to rejoice in the diving accident and being a quadriplegic, who can't dress herself, can't brush her teeth, can't do hardly anything for herself, in unbelievable pain and discomfort all the time, and yet being used of the Lord? Not only here, but in foreign countries. How is it possible? Because she rejoices in the grace of God.

Aaron, my buddy Aaron, who, when he was going through the excruciating pain of cancer, woke up in the middle of the night and didn't say, "Oh Lord! Why me?" but "I want to see my King!" That's the kind of perspective he had. Our friend, Michael—imagine what he's going through now with the loss of his wife, and yet, the email the he sent out. They were singing songs, singing hymns, like Paul did in the Philippian jail.

I have a friend, a good friend from my church, named Carl, who is in pain all the time with his feet. It gets worse and worse and worse. And yet, people tell me he has a smile on his face all the time. I don't need to see it. I can hear it in his voice. He just loves the Lord. How is it possible for them and for us to rejoice in the Lord? It's by his grace.

You can see where the importance, of course, in that Philippians passage that we read, thinking on what is true, what is noble, what is good, thinking on Christ, setting our affections on things above. That may mean you might have to turn the news off once in a while on TV.

I remember a couple of weeks ago whenever I was getting ready for bed. It was about ten to eleven. I told my family good night, and my mom said, "Aren't you going to stay up and watch the news?" I said, "I know what they're going to say on the news. Someone got shot. Someone got raped. Who knows all the crimes committed. War in the world. Pirates lost." {LAUGHTER} I don't need to always be bombarded with things like that, let alone the other junk that's on TV so much of the time. No, in order to rejoice in the Lord, we have to think on those things that are good, the things of Scripture. Meditate on the glory of the Lord and the joy of heaven. Absolutely. This is reality. This is much more reality than what's going on in the world out there. That's for sure.

Not only that, we are to rejoice when we are persecuted. [UNCLEAR] used to talk about the gout and the rheumatism. Well the gout is rejoicing in tribulation; the rheumatism is that we're to rejoice when we are persecuted, nevertheless, we are.

Oh let's see...who haven't I picked on yet? Sig, I'm going to pick on you again—Luke 6:22-23.

Sig: *I'll read your translation.*

Alright. Thank you.

Sig: *"²²Blessed are you when men hate you,
And when they exclude you,
And revile you, and cast out your name as evil,*

*For the Son of Man's sake.
23Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!
For indeed your reward is great in heaven,
For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets."*

Jesus, did we hear you right? Really, Jesus? Would you say that again?

Sig: *Blessed are you when men hate...oh no...*

No. {LAUGHTER} No, I mean, here's what he's saying. Not only when men hate you once, but when they exclude you. How do you like to be excluded for the sake of Christ? And revile you, "You stupid, no good so-n-so, blankety-blank," cast out your name as evil.

Martin Luther, in the 16th Century, was called by Bishop Fisher a privy pot. We all know what that is, don't we? Because of his view of, his truth of justification by faith alone.

Sig: *I don't know what that means.*

You don't.

Sig: *Privy pot.*

Privy pot. Yes

Sig: *You mean like at outhouse?*

Yes. Exactly. You got it. But notice, he says, "Rejoice when they do these things to you for the Son of Man's sake." It doesn't say "rejoice when you deserve it." I was reading in a book a couple of weeks ago about a so-called evangelist who stood up on the street corner and yelled to everybody, "You're going to hell!" How did he know that everybody there was going to hell? All the, just constant, making a spectacle of himself. Or a certain church in Kansas that protests military funerals and talks about homosexuality. Not that that thing shouldn't be talked about, but the way they do it is absolutely wrong.

Those people are rightly being persecuted...persecuted is probably the wrong word...but rightly being reviled because of the way they do those things. But no, "For my sake, for the sake of the Son of Man, Christ says, "we're to rejoice." Not only to rejoice, but to leap for joy.

Now that's so foreign to us Americans, isn't it? It really is. We don't know what persecution is. Sure, there was the woman in South Carolina who gave a test in the Christian school. It was a test to grade school kids on creation. She taught creationism. Someone who sent their son to the Christian school got wind of it, didn't like, put it on the Internet and she got death threats and they wanted to burn the school down and everything like that. People who, for example, don't believe in gay rights, a person wouldn't lend their property to people that wanted live there or whatever. We know about that, but the persecution in Islamic countries. Every day I read of things that are just...it just boggles my mind how people can be so evil. But Jesus said that we're to rejoice in that. It may happen to us someday, folks. Will God give us the grace to rejoice in that? To leap for joy? Because he says what? Great is your reward in heaven. We're not to complain about it, though I'm sure, in myself I would. Or just put up with it. Or pretend to enjoy it, but we're to rejoice because great is our reward in heaven.

Yes, we are unprofitable servants. But God condescends to give us a reward of grace in heaven for this. Unbelievable. It's only by God's grace that we can rejoice in our sufferings and tribulations and persecutions. People have done it and are doing it today.

Last, but certainly not least, the best is yet to come. Bob are you here?

Bob: *Psalm 16:11, "You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."*

Alright. Don't tell me the Old Testament doesn't talk about eternal life. Okay, it may not be as explicit as the New Testament, and there are a few passages that might cause us to pause. But nevertheless, here we go. At your right hand, in your presence is fullness of joy. You want to talk about ultimate joy. We say, whenever we're on a good vacation or experience something, maybe you who are married in particular, a nice moment of marriage or whatever. What do we say? Or some sports team when they win, they say, "It doesn't get any better than this." Well yes, it does. It gets infinitely better, doesn't it? In your presence in fullness of joy. You ain't seen nothing yet. The

best experience that you may have with Christ on this earth pales into insignificance as to what it's going to be like in glory. It goes back to what we were talking about earlier when Jesus said, "Don't rejoice that the demons are subject in your name, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Not only that, but how long is this joy? It's forever. At your right hand, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, are pleasures forevermore. It's forever. It's going to get better...and better...and better...in heaven and in the new heaven and the new earth with our resurrected bodies.

That's why we can rejoice, even when things aren't going well for us at the present time. This world is not our home. Right? We're just a-passin' through. We're citizens of the kingdom. We're citizens of heaven.

Audience Member: *Just to go along with that, in John 15:1-10, we see Jesus telling us there, I think 11 times he says, "Abide in Me." That's verses 1-10. In verse 11 he says, "I've told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." As we abide in him, you're talking about in heaven, [UNCLEAR] in your presence is fullness of joy. That's exactly what Jesus says in John 15 [UNCLEAR].*

That's what he wants for us.

Audience Member: *That's where it comes from, is being in his presence.*

That's right. That's what he wants for us. Indeed, it comes from being in his presence. Abiding in him. Spending time with him. That's the importance of reading Scripture. Praying. What we're doing here on Friday mornings and in Sunday worship. It's a great, great thing. We just scratched the surface, so I hope, brothers, that I've given you a little bit of a taste. As I said before, when I teach you, I teach myself a hundred fold. Absolutely. Let us pray.

Father in heaven, your Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. Father, I thank you for these men today. I thank you for the time that we've had in your Word, because these are your words Father. These are not our words. It is absolutely impossible for us to do what you've told us to do, to rejoice in all circumstances unless you are with us, unless you are in us, Lord Jesus, and give us the grace to do so. We know that you will. We know that you do. I just pray, Father, that all of us, no matter

what circumstances we're going through today, Lord, are able, by your grace, to rejoice in you and to do it always, until that day when we will indeed have fullness of joy at your right hand forevermore. And all the Brave Men said...Amen!!