

Where is Joy Found?

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- [0 : 0 0] Okay, if you have met more than two people, you can sit down. How you guys doing? Wow, I didn't know.
- How you doing? Good, okay, good, good, good. Well, we are Watermark Church. We've been here for a little over a year, and our focus is to let the glory of the Lord be known wherever he's put us and to never forget what it was like to know what it was like before we knew Christ to be out here to reach out to people.
- And we are a family-oriented church. What we mean by that is that there are singles and there's adults and there's kids and that all of them take place in worship. And I know as Carolyn up here, you have a 9-year-old, 11-year-old, and you're 18.
- So we had all age groups hit here, so that was really good. Thank you. Melissa, wherever you are, that was rocking. And Oscar, great job. So what I want to do is I want to bring the kiddos up and just do a little controlled chaos time here.
- So with the kids, come on up front, I want to talk to you about something. Come on up. I got a special treat for you. Okay, come on.
- [1 : 0 9] Just sit right around here, okay? How you guys doing? Okay, so the big kids don't want to treat, huh? I'm talking to my kids.
- Hey, guys, okay, I need your help because I'm getting old and my brain doesn't work all the time. So can you help me? Oh, come on.
- That doesn't sound very encouraging. Yes? Okay. Okay, so I need some help. What is tomorrow? Monday. Chinese New Year. Okay, we're some red and yellow people, very literal.
- What is tomorrow? Chinese New Year. Oh, wow. Okay, Chinese New Year is tomorrow. Can someone tell me something special that your family does at Chinese New Year? Meet and greet your uncles and aunts.
- What else? Wow, did you hear that? We go to restaurants and random old people give us lycees. So if there's any random old people here today, you need to meet these kids in the restaurant.
- [2 : 1 8] Anything else? What do you guys do for Chinese New Year? Huh? Huh? Okay, translate that for me. Eat food?
- Okay. I need your help something else. Do what? Chicken leg baby. Okay. Okay. Can you guys tell me what this is? Red packet.
- Lycee. Lycee. Now, we're not going to give out a lycee today because that would be illegal. So next week, we'll give out lycees next week, right?
- But does anybody know what this character means right here? Lycee. No. No. Anyone? Ready New Year. No. Red packet.
- Red packet. What? Okay. What else? People want Santa Claus to come. Yeah. There's a mixture.

[3 : 16] Okay. So this, Melissa. Prosperity. And it means, right, Christopher. And it means blessing. And so when we give this to people, we want to give them blessings. So let me ask you a question.

Do you know what the Bible says is the greatest blessing that God wants to give us? Jesus. Jesus. What else? Is there anything else?

Gabriel. God. Right. Right. Right. You know, the Bible says that God, the greatest blessing he wants to give us is his son, Jesus. And he tells us this thing right here. And we're going to talk about it as adults today. He says the greatest blessing we can have is there's a book like this in heaven.

Did you know that? There's a book like this in heaven. God lent it to me today. Okay. But the book in heaven has all of God's children's name on it.

And so if you're a child of God, your name is in this book. And that means that you will never be separated from God. That you're always part of his family.

[4 : 19] So the Bible says that this is the greatest blessing, getting our name in this book. How do we get our name in this book? Look, you said it, Jesus. You're right.

And so we want to talk and worship and tell our friends about Jesus so they can get their names in that book also. Right? Okay. Let me pray for us.

Will you join me in a prayer? Will you pray with me? I'll pray and you can repeat after me. Okay. Let's pray. Dear Jesus, thank you that you love us.

Thank you that you take care of us. Thank you for blessing us with your son. Help us to bless our friends by telling them about Jesus.

We love you. Amen. Okay. Now, you know what the second greatest blessing is, I think? What is it? You know what it is?

[5 : 24] Chocolate. Candy. Candy. So I have a lot of candy here. So you guys get to go to class. There's Tootsie Rolls.

There's gum droppers. There's everything. And so you guys go to class. Everything. No. We'll get that next time.

Okay. Okay. So you guys are dismissed. And the teachers are going to go to class. And we'll pass you the second blessing of candies. Okay? Okay.

See you guys later. Okay. Go to class. Candy. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. The scripture reading today comes from the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 10. Please follow along in your bulletin.

The 70 returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name. And he said to them, I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

[6 : 18] Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.

At that very time, he rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit and said, I praise you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.

Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in your sight. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal him.

Turning to the disciples, he said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see, for I say to you that many prophets and kings wish to see the things which you see and do not see them, and to hear the things which you hear and do not hear them.

This is the reading of God's Word. My Jesus is real. My Jesus is plastic. It's interesting that as the older you get and you walk with God, you realize how to decipher things people say.

[7 : 37] You learn to understand what they really mean when they say certain things. As in studying medicine, one of the things I realize is that often people live lives like this guy.

If you were to ask them about joy in their life or happiness, even as being a Christian, they would say that it's pretty much non-existent. That they do the things they think they're supposed to do, but nothing really changes in their life, and they wonder if they're doing the right things and why they don't feel joy and happiness in their life.

Working in the trauma unit, what I realized pretty quickly was that people were not joyful, and the most prescribed drug that we often prescribe to people when they came walking into the ER was an antidepressant.

And the longer I worked in the trauma unit, the more antidepressants I prescribed or saw the doctors prescribe. You know that in the UK today, \$4 billion this year are going to be spent on antidepressants.

I mean, it's the most prescribed drug in the UK. And in America, it's even more because they were told that America is this culture of pill addicts. So billions and billions and billions of dollars go into it as people search for joy and things in their life to have meaning, and they find no meaning, and they become joyless.

[9 : 04] It's interesting, I've been told by my friends who work in the healthcare system in Hong Kong that depression and lack of joy and lack of happiness is one of the leading things they see as people come to them.

And that the prescription for antidepressants is going out of the roof. And the thing that depresses me about all of that is that when they tell me that the age group that is using these pills the most and they see the largest increase is in elementary school kids.

Because the kids look at their life and they look at their future and they look at their families and they see no joy and they see no hope. So we're going to talk about joy today in this passage, which I think is seminal for us as Christians.

But I want to do it by asking a couple questions on joy. The first one begins like this. What brings you joy today? I mean, what would need to happen in your life for you to feel extreme happiness and joy?

What would make you the happiest right now? Because the Bible says that what brings us joy and what brings us happiness often reveals our true values. And sometimes those things are our functional saviors.

[10 : 26] We look for those things to give our lives meaning and purpose and trust. So what brings you joy today? Do you find joy in temporal things?

In temporary things? Things that are here today and gone tomorrow? Or do you find joy in eternal things? What brings you joy?

What would bring you the most joy? A massive bonus, a raise, a new job position, the car of your choice, the watch of your choice? Or a friend coming to faith and becoming a Christian?

What would bring you the most joy? Your kid getting into the right preschool, the right Ivy League school? Or your kid coming home from youth group this week and saying that they had made a decision to invite Jesus Christ into their life.

And they want to do a Bible study in your home or in your office. And oh yeah, by the way, they're thinking about becoming missionaries. But be honest. What would bring you the most joy?

[11 : 31] That incredible raise, that incredible new job title, that new car, that watch? Or hearing that your worst enemy came to Christ.

And realized that their life was out of control. And they invited Jesus into their life. What would bring you more joy? The passage today is full of joy.

I mean, it is seminal in what this talks about. And it's all about us finding joy, how we lose our joy, and how we keep our joy. So I want to take a really brief look at this and talk about this for us today in this antidepressant, drug-induced world that we live in.

What does the Bible say about joy? Because the passage that Andrew read is the only passage in the New Testament where it says that Jesus was overcome with joy. It's the only time it's ever said that he was out of control with joy.

And so what I want to do is I want to look at it and see what made him out of control with joy. What was it that he was giving high fives to all his disciples? Now remember last week we talked about the mission. Because we're in Luke.

[12 : 41] Luke chapter 10, verse 17. Last week we did Luke chapter 10, verse 1 through 16. And Jesus sends his disciples out on this mission. We talked about how he sends you and I out on this mission.

And remember before they went out to the mission, he talked to them about there's a world out there. There's this harvest that was ripe for the picking. And what he said in the Greek was basically that there were people who needed to hear about God.

Their hearts were right. They needed to hear the gospel message. And when we talk about the gospel message, we say that the gospel is basically turning to God for forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We said that the gospel message is basically everyone realizing that before God we haven't lived a life that is pleasing to God. And coming before him and embracing the forgiveness and relationship that he gives us through his son Jesus Christ.

We said that the gospel is that God saves broken people. That God saves sinners. And so his disciples go out on this mission. And remember the distinctness of the mission.

[13 : 45] He said it's going to be really, really hard. He said there's going to be difficulties. He said there's going to be sheep among wolves. He's going to tell them, you know, if you just went ahead and planted churches or planted hospitals and planted universities.

And you taught people that religion was about doing this and doing that and being good and working hard. And if you did all these things at the end, there was this total box. And everything would be okay. And everyone gets to heaven.

He said if the church said those things, everyone would love us. But he says because we preach the gospel, which isn't sexy.

And we say things like grace. And we say things like helplessness. And we say things like need. And we say things like darkness.

And we say things like out of control. And we say things like Jesus is the only way. Because we say these things, people are going to hate us. And when you preach this message to the people around you, often you end up risking everything.

[14 : 54] Jesus tells his disciples, hey, it's going to be hard, but you're going to go out and you're going to see amazing things. He said that you're ambassadors and you have this message. And the message is the gospel. And the message is power.

And the message is life. And everyone needs to hear this message. Everyone. Everyone. And as an ambassador, I want you going out and I want you sharing these things to the people. Because you are my representative.

And Jesus warns throughout the passage we talked about last week. He warns of hardships, difficulties, sacrifices, judgment. And you would expect after you heard this passage, I mean, you're probably, if you hadn't heard the message, you're warning everybody just left.

I mean, it's kind of like you have this family trip. You need, you have to go on. You have to go on it. And you're in your mind, you're thinking, oh, this is going to be terrible.

If I can just gut it through. And once I get through, it'll be okay. Then I'll be free. Because it's going to be bad. But that's not what happens when Jesus' disciples come back. The passage says that they are overwhelmed with joy.

[15 : 53] They see amazing things. They do amazing things. And they see power in God's word changing people's lives. As we look at this passage, there are three things that have stuck out to me this week as I've been praying and thinking about joy.

And what we learn from joy. And what we as a church need to be thinking about as we go out there. And the first one is really simple. It's found in verses 17 to 19. And it basically says that joy comes from knowing that we have nothing to fear.

You look at verses 17, 18, and 19. It tells us there's this battle going on. There's this massive battle. Did you know there's a battle going on right now? Did you know that there's a spiritual warfare going on right now?

Did you know that right beside you are demons and angels? And the scripture says that the demons are there. When a word of truth comes out, they pluck it away from you.

So you don't hear it and you don't believe it. And there's angels in here praying for us. And the angels are looking down on us. And they're astounded because they're hearing the gospel message. Something that they weren't even able to hear and to respond to.

[17 : 01] And so people go out. And in his day and in our day, people are afraid of the supernatural. And you see in verses 17, 18, and 19 that they go out.

And he says that 70 returned with joy. And they said, Lord, even the demons are subject. And that word subject basically means, it's a military term. It means they get put in line. They get shown their place.

They know their rank. But his disciples go out and they say, we're here because Jesus sent us. And the demons and all the forces that they're struggling against fall in line. And they fall back. And he says, all of these things are subject to us in your name.

Now he's not saying, say the name of Jesus at the end of every prayer. I think sometimes we do that and we feel like it's this formula. But in Greek, what he means is in the power of God. And so the disciples went out and they saw these amazing things happen.

And they saw God's power going through them. Verse 18, he says, I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. Did you realize it was the devil?

[18 : 06] I mean, we don't talk about him very much. Because it's kind of uncool. I mean, I think sometimes we kind of fall in one of two ways. Either we talk about him all the time, he's behind every stone. Or sometimes we don't talk about him at all. But the Bible says that he's there.

And that he's the enemy and he hates you. I mean, he hates you more than your worst enemy in your office hates you. And he wants to destroy you.

And he wants to kill you. And he wants to deceive you. And the Bible says that he was a created being. He was an angelic realm. He was God's most perfect creation.

He was an angel of light. He was a musical angel. He was a covering angel. He was as close as you can get to God's presence.

And in the scripture in your bulletin in Ezekiel and Isaiah, it says, Until the day pride was found in his heart. And he realized, I don't want to serve God.

[19 : 10] I want to be God. And so he led this rebellion with one-third of the angels in heaven. It's interesting because that same tactic is a tactic that he uses in my life all the time.

Does he use it in your life? I mean, God is okay, but you know better. I mean, God is, he created everything, but he expects you to do it now, right?

You can do it. It was funny. My little daughter, KK, had her school play this week, and she was Eve. And so on Thursday, Christina text-messed me a picture of her with an apple holding it to Adam.

And Christina said, it took her like five times. Eat it, eat it, eat it. And finally, Adam ate it. And God comes and says, why did you do this? And Caitlin says, the devil made me do it.

And the scripture says the devil was powerful. And that he was perfect, but he had pride, and he wanted to be God. He did not want to serve God. And so the Bible says that he was kicked out of heaven, and he fell to the earth like lightning.

[20 : 16] And then the passage we're reading today is basically like an invasion. Because Jesus sends his 70 disciples out, and it's like D-Day.

They hit the beach, and they start moving out the darkness. They start sharing the gospel. They start healing people. They start casting out demons. They start doing amazing things. And the war, we already know the war is finished.

It's already ended because Jesus dies on a cross, and everyone who follows him wins. But the battles continue, and this is the first battle for this hedge, this property of earth. And so the disciples come back, and they are high-fiving, and they're out of control.

And Jesus looks at them, and he says, hey, all these things I've given to you in verse 19, I've given you the authority to tread. And it's going back to Genesis, where it says that after that fall, God looks at the woman and says, your seed is going to tread on the head of the serpent.

And Jesus says to his disciples, and he says to you and me, I've given you the authority. I've given you the power. I've given you the ability to go out and to tread and to fight these demonic forces.

[21 : 25] You don't have to fear to tread on the heads of serpents and scorpions. The word in Greek for serpents actually means evil people. And the serpent was always a symbol of the devil.

And scorpions is this demonic realm. And so the disciples come back, and they're overcome with joy because they know that they have nothing to fear, and neither do you or I.

But sometimes we walk in fear. Sometimes we don't trust God.

Sometimes we don't believe that he's good. And the scripture says in the moment that we do that, Lucifer has won a battle in our heart. But the passage here in 17 and 18 and 19 and all throughout the Bible says that Satan has been defeated, and you and I have nothing to fear.

As God's children, we walk in his power. As God's children, we walk in his name. And he says realizing that should bring us ultimate joy because God is in control, and we don't need to fear anything.

[22 : 40] Later on in verse 20, he tells us the next thing that we need to be joyful for. And I think this is something I've been going over and over these last couple weeks. You look at the passage here. They've come back, and they've said, we're high fives.

Everything is great. We beat the devil. He's fallen. I mean, he was a chief angel, but he's nothing compared to you and you living through us. We got it going. We got it made. And in verse 20, Jesus says this.

Nevertheless, don't rejoice in all these things you're seeing, that the spirits are subject to you, that you can control them, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.

You see what he's saying there? He's saying, like we told the kids, that there's this book here. Not this one. There's another one. And it's in heaven. And God has prescribed all the names of his children in it.

And even as the disciples go out and they see all this power, and they see all these amazing things, Jesus says, hey, don't get overwhelmed with that. I mean, it's good to have spiritual gifts. It's good to be obedient.

[23 : 46] It's good to do the right thing. But in the end, what we need to have joy in, what we need to rejoice in is in our salvation. And in grace. He's saying the devil knew all those things.

The devil could speak in tongues. The devil could prophesize. He had every spiritual gift. He was right beside God. He did all of those things, but he didn't know grace. He wasn't saved.

In Matthew 7, I put that in your bulletin too, it says in the end times, some people are going to come before the throne of Christ, and they're going to say, Christ, I did this, and I did that, and I cast out demons, and I spoke in tongues, and I did all these things.

What does Jesus say there? Can someone read that to me? Depart from me, for I never knew you.

See, we can't find our joy in our gifts. We can't find our joy in the things that are going on in our life. We can't find our joy in our circumstances, because those circumstances will change.

[24 : 54] But what Jesus says you find joy in is you find joy that your name is written in his book. You find joy in grace. You know, I really struggle with this, because I think this is the number one reason people leave the church.

I really do. I think it's probably the number one reason pastors leave ministry, and Christian missionaries leave the field. It's because they're out there doing everything they should be doing.

You come, and you serve, and you do everything, and you're using your gifts. You're here every Sunday. You're setting up. But then one day, someone doesn't thank you the way that you want to be thanked. Or you don't feel appreciated the way that you should be feel.

Or you preach this amazing sermon, and no one ever comes up and says, that was great. By the way, please don't come up. Or you do all these initiatives, and people just don't come to faith at that time, and nothing really changes in the community.

And you're using your gifts, and you're using your spirit, spiritual gifts, and you're using all your talents and everything you have, and things just aren't working out the way you hoped they would. And so you just go, I'm out of here.

[26 : 05] I mean, church isn't what I thought it would be. I thought if I did this, this, and this, then God would bless me, and it'd be great. But I'm doing these things, and nothing's changing in my life.

Have you ever thought that? You ever thought, why am I serving today? Because no one really even noticed. No one even really cares. No one even comes up and thanks me about this thing. It's just a waste of time.

Why am I talking to these people? Because there's no change going on in their life. They're not hearing me. They're not, I'm doing everything to show Christ to them, and my love and my words, and nothing's happening. I'm using all my talent and all the gifts at my disposal, and people's lives aren't being changed.

And Jesus says, you're right, because people's lives aren't changed because of your gifts and your talents and your faithfulness. But people's lives are changed because of grace. People's lives are changed because of mercy.

And people's lives are changed because God comes, and God chooses us, and he writes our name in this book of life. You know, the interesting thing about the book of life is there's only one hand signature in it.

[27 : 15] They're not going to find your hand signature in it as you come in and write your name in it. Because the Bible says that God is the one who writes our name in his book. And as I read this passage, I see over and over again what Jesus is trying to tell us.

He's saying, joy comes in realizing that you're God's child. Joy comes in realizing that God is in control of your life. Joy comes in realizing that God is doing everything for you.

You can trust him because he's good. If you try to do it on your own, you're going to be disappointed because there are a lot of people who have gifts, and there are a lot of people who have abilities, but they don't understand salvation.

And they don't understand grace. And after a while, we just give up because it just becomes too hard and too difficult to walk with God. You see what this passage is saying here?

Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, what you've been doing and what you saw happen, that the spirits are subject to you, your faithfulness, what you've done and how you've served, but rejoice that your names are recorded in the book of heaven.

[28 : 28] You know what that means? That means that the greatest accomplishment you're going to do today, the greatest thing that you're going to accomplish in your life, the thing that you're going to be most known for, the greatest thing that you're going to do in your life has nothing to do with you, but it has to do with God writing his name on your heart.

Have you ever thought that? I mean, I think that's sometimes why I become so discouraged sometimes.

Because I'm saying, I'm doing this and I'm doing that and people aren't listening and these things are going on and my kids are out of control and I'm doing all the things right. And this passage says, yeah, you can do all those things right, but don't rejoice in those things because ultimately, the greatest thing that's going to happen to you is that God's going to put your name in his life, the book of life.

And that's what's going to give you joy. And that's what's going to help you go through the hard times. And that's what's going to help you through the difficult times. Grace is everlasting.

Does that make sense? I mean, don't rejoice. I mean, it's good to have gifts. And it's good to be obedient. And it's good to do those things. But what Jesus is saying is ultimately, the greatest thing that's going to happen to you is that God's going to save you.

[29 : 56] And that's going to have nothing to do about you. And so what he's saying is, as you walk through your day, Tobin, you realize that I saved you and that my grace is upon you.

You can trust me. As you struggle at work and things aren't working out the way you've done and you planned and you do all these things and things are still falling off, Tobin, you can realize that my grace is upon you and you can trust me.

As your kids don't turn out the way that you thought they would or you expected them to happen or your husband leaves you or your wife is crazy, Christ says, my grace I give to you and you can trust me.

So ultimately what he's saying here is that grace and joy comes from having our name in God's book of life. The final thing that sticks out here is verses 21 through 24.

And if you look at them, he basically says that joy comes in our lives from realizing that God is saving people and changing lives all around us. joy and happiness come by seeing God work in our world.

[31 : 15] I mean, think about that for a second. Jesus in verse 21, sometimes we just think, well, Jesus was happy. But in the Greek it says, woo! That's how joyful he is.

Not like, I'm so happy. I'm so happy. What makes Jesus so happy? What overpowers Jesus is God opening people's eyes to himself.

What overpowers Jesus is God working in people's hearts and pointing their face towards Christ. What overpowers Christ is God opening our eyes to himself through his son, Jesus Christ.

Verse 21, it says, at this time he rejoiced greatly. It was overwhelming in the Holy Spirit. And he said, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have not hidden these things, that you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, but you've revealed them to us, babies.

And Jesus says, what brings us joy is seeing God at work in our world. Seeing people's lives change, seeing the gospel going out. Seeing us as a church being a part of it. When Jesus sees us out there reaching out in your workplace, when Jesus sees you doing outreach in your community, when Jesus sees us going into the nursing homes, those are what makes him stand up and go, woo!

[32 : 51] Because he realizes the power of darkness is gone. What do you find joy in today?

The passage says that if we don't find it in the knowledge that God has saved us, that if we don't find it in the knowledge that his son is in control, that if we don't find it in the knowledge that God is opening up eyes of people all around us and he's using you and me, if we don't find it in those things, we're going to be depressed and we're going to be taking antidepressants all day long.

So Jesus warns us as his disciples as you go out and as you're on a mission, realize that I'm on this mission and I go before you and as I go before you, you should have joy and confidence because I'm in control.

The passage goes on and it says, but in the end, all of these things happen, verse 24, because God gives us grace to see these things.

Do you realize that right now? I think some of us, we talk about doing Bible studies and sharing our faith and most of us in here would say, I'm not ready, I'm not ready, I'm not ready. But what Jesus just told us here is that if King David walked into this room or if Elijah walked into this room, the things that we know he would be astounded at because he never saw Jesus.

[34 : 23] He thought that there was going to be a Jesus. He saw them far off in a shadow. But that you and I see him, we read about him, we know his life and we can trust him.

This passage tells us that joy is intertwined with grace. And if we don't understand grace, we'll never understand joy.

If we don't understand grace, that God came and gave his son to die for you and me, that God came, he opened our eyes, that God came and pointed our face towards Jesus, that if we don't understand that, that he came and he wrote our names in the book and it didn't write his name as I had to put Tobin's name in here because he's just so cool.

No. The Bible says that Tobin's name is here because God had mercy and grace on him. Because he's lost.

He's broken. He needs grace. This passage says in verse 23 and 24 that it's God that allows us to see things that Old Testament saints struggle to see and they would love to see what we've seen.

[35 : 47] Verse 22 tells us that God is the one who brings his son to us and he directs his son's face. And so the imagery is this, that here is God and Christ is right beside him and Christ is this mirror and Christ is this mirror that reflects God's image to you and me.

And as we become Christians, we become mirrors. And so we have God's image reflecting off of Christ, reflecting off of us and out into the dark world. And verse 23 says it all happens because God is the one who does it in our life.

He's the one that aligns Christ so that we can see his reflection and fall in love with him. Verse 21 says that God reveals Jesus to you and me. That we don't go on this search looking for Jesus because we're lost, we walk in darkness, but it's because of grace and mercy that God does this and because of this we have joy.

Verse 20 says it is God who writes our names in his book of life and that's what we should rejoice in. And verse 17 and 19 says it is God who gives us victory and power in darkness.

Everybody's really quiet. Everybody's really hungry. Everybody's really bored. I don't know. But what this passage tells us is that joy comes from understanding grace.

[37 : 09] And God wants to give that grace to you and me. I want to try a little exercise. On your, and I get in trouble with this at home because I tell my kids not to write on themselves.

Everyone had a pen on their seat. I want you to take that pen out. On the palm of your hand that is not your dominant hand.

So for 80% of us it's going to be our right hand so that means it's our left hand. I want you to take that pen and I want you to write the word grace. Come on. You can do it.

You can wipe it right off before you eat. Come on. Come on. Terry's back there laughing. Write the word grace.

And as you go through this day I want you to just look at this a couple times and think of this passage. That God has sent you and me as his church out on this mission. And this mission is what?

[38 : 16] Grace. That God is allowing us to reflect the image of his son because he brought us into his family and this happened because of come on guys.

Pastor asks a question. You repeat. That God's sending you out into your workplace into places where people are going to hate you and scorn you and mock you and he's still there with you pushing back the darkness and all of this happens because of that God before the eternity happened we have eternity past we have time and we have eternity future.

The God in eternity past knew you he opened up his book of life and he wrote your name down and all of that happened because of you can't have joy without grace.

If you're walking around unjoyful unhappy disappointed in life the scripture tells us today there's probably a very good reason for that it's because we don't understand God's grace in our life or we don't understand what he's done in our life.

Let's pray. Father we just thank you for this day. We thank you for your son we thank you for the mission we thank you for the message. We thank you that we don't worship a plastic Jesus.

[39 : 54] I pray Lord for all of us in here as we go out today that we would understand your grace in a different way that we'd understand your word and your message to us. Father we just thank you for your word your book of life where you've written our names we pray as a church as we go out today in this week that we realize that you've given us a power and authority over all the enemy and the demons and the darkness that we'll face we realize that there's nothing that's going to come into our lives that you haven't allowed we realize that our names are secure in the book of life and we have nothing to fear or doubt we realize that you're good and we can trust you Father we realize that we come to you not because we're good because we would be lost if we had to be good but we come to you because of your grace we pray all these things in your son Jesus name

Amen