

Sources of Joy

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[0 : 00] Turn in your Bibles to John chapter 15. John 15 and our scripture reading this morning will be from verses 1 through 21.

Jesus is speaking here. He says, I am the true vine and my father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself. It must remain in the vine.

Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine. You are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit.

Apart from me, you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he's like a branch that is thrown away and withers. Such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

[1 : 11] If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given you. This is to my father's glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

As the father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 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.

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this, love each other as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master's business.

Instead, I have called you friends. For everything I learned from my father, I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.

[2 : 27] Then the father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command, love each other. If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.

If you belong to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world because I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

Remember the words I spoke to you. No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

They will treat you this way because of my name. For they do not know the one who sent me. Let's pay attention as we hear God's word preached.

I want to turn your attention to the text that was read for us, to one verse in particular, John 15, 11.

[3 : 38] John 15, 11. Jesus was leaving his disciples, and he wasn't leaving them to a world that loved them.

He was going via the cross, via crucifixion and resurrection. It was not going to be all smooth sailing for him or for them.

The disciples were getting ready to face very challenging, difficult days. If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.

If they hated me, they're going to hate you. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. He was leaving them to a world that was completely upside down and foreign to them.

An upside down world. They will, chapter 16 says, they will put you out of the synagogue. In fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.

[4 : 46] That's how upside down the world that they're going to be living in, that we live in. That's how turned around it's going to be, how upside down. They will put you to death and think, all the while, I am doing this for God and God is pleased with me that I'm doing it.

In Sunday school, we heard about Saul of Tarsus who persecuted Christians who went around to other cities and dragged them back to Jerusalem to oversee their execution.

And the whole time, he thought he was serving the Lord. They call evil good. And they call evil, they call good evil.

Now, he had been with them. He had been with them in this world. He had gone through these things, this persecution, this opposition, with them. But this was a very unsettling night, an anxious night.

Have you had anxious nights before very frightening mornings? Well, that's what this night was.

[6 : 01] It was an anxious night leading to a terrible morning. By nine o'clock, nine a.m., the following morning, he was going to be nailed to a cross.

And they were going to be scattered. some here, some there, but all filled with fear, all filled with sorrow, all, in a certain way, stunned at the sudden turn of events of the world that they woke up to, of the world that they were now living in.

And so, that's why verse 11 seems almost so out of the blue, out of place, like a sore thumb sticking out.

It's so surprising. Look at it. I've told you this. I've told you this. In Greek, and in most translations, I've told you these things.

These things. I think he has something more in mind than just what was immediately following. He's talking about these things.

[7 : 05] I've told you these things so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. So, yes, they were going to, they were living in a present evil age.

No escaping that. No getting away from that. The evil world that we live in persecutes us and then calls it good.

They look at blatant evil and say, I don't see anything evil here. I actually see something good. Now, you can think of examples of that. it was the same back then.

But, but Jesus says, I've told you these things that you might have joy. That you might have joy.

What kind of joy? Full joy. Complete joy. Joy beyond the circumstances. Beyond our circumstances. Jesus. As we're going to look at this and look for the things that produce joy, what you're not going to see is the world is great, things are going well, everything is dandy, you're doing good in every aspect.

[8 : 20] We often think that our lack of joy is the result of our circumstances. Now, isn't that true? If I ask you, why aren't you happy? And most of the time, if you're like me, you would say, well, this is happening and this is the way this is and this is the way that is.

There's people in my life that are bothering me. Lack of money, bad health. But Jesus talks about a joy, a complete joy, a full joy, his joy, that is beside all of our circumstances.

a joy in who Christ is and what he's accomplishing and accomplished for us. So maybe you are looking at an evil world or maybe you're looking at yourself and you're saying how, I gotta be honest, how can I have joy here?

How can I be happy? Maybe you're looking at yourself and saying, how can I be happy when I have so much to do? I have so much that is on my shoulders.

Or maybe you could say maybe there's something wrong in your relationship with the Lord and you're saying the Lord seems to demand so much of me and he's never happy with me.

[9 : 46] Maybe it's a kind of sorrow that's born out of legalism. I feel like a failure. I feel like I'm under attack.

I feel like there's sorrow on the inside and sorrow coming from the outside. How can I ever be happy? but in the face of all of that Jesus says, I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Now either Jesus is completely deluded, he's just wrongheaded, he's talking about things that are impossible, maybe, and I don't think that's the case.

Maybe he isn't wise enough and he doesn't understand your circumstances. Maybe he's just a con man and he's promising something he can't deliver, or maybe he's actually telling us the truth.

That the things that I'm telling you, if you believe them, if you do them, would produce joy in your life, joy beyond your circumstances.

[10 : 58] And so really, how do we live in a hostile world? How can we live an abundant life, a happy life, an obedient, fruitful life in this world?

Well, the joy of the Lord is our strength. So what I would ask you is just to take your temperature right here at the very beginning and ask yourself, am I a joyful Christian?

Is my joy coming from something beyond my circumstances? Do I have a joy in my heart that lives through withering circumstances, that lives through difficult times?

Can trees grow in the desert? Can trees grow in the desert? The answer is yes, they can, if they're in an oasis. They do quite well if they have found a body of water to live next to.

Can trees grow in the desert? Yes. Can Christians be happy in a desert world? Yes, they can. They can. We can. We can be fruitful.

[12 : 04] And that's what Jesus wants for you. So he's leaving them. But he wasn't leaving them to despair. He wasn't leaving us with the whole world against us and nothing but sadness on the inside.

He isn't leaving them without joy. He doesn't leave us without real reasons and real ways to be happy. So do you need more joy?

Are you a sad, stressed out Christian? Hopeless Christian? Well, what I want you to do is come look at what Jesus says to you this morning.

And just see if, as we begin to uncover these things, and next week we're going to even go into more things, if they don't start producing joy. Maybe you're like that tree in the desert.

Well, what Jesus does for us is he starts uncovering water that we can live in and live by. So are you a sad, stressed out, hopeless Christian? Well, just come look at what Jesus tells you, says to you.

[13 : 10] Look at our verse. What does he say? Let's just dial this in. I have told you these things. Now, what are these things? I think it's everything that he has been saying from chapter 14 on.

Chapter 14 on. Chapter 14 verse 1. Do not let your hearts be troubled, he says. Do not let your hearts be troubled.

And then from chapter 14 on, he is addressing their troubled hearts. grace. He's telling them things that will give them peace, that will give them joy in the face of the sad things that are about to come. Do not let your hearts be troubled. So from 14 on, he's going to talk to them about heaven. He's going to talk to them about the Holy Spirit. He's going to talk to them about how they can be fruitful. He's going to talk to them about how he loves them. He's going to tell them things to believe and things to do that would produce joy.

[14 : 23] And he says, I've been telling you about all of these things. Now maybe that's a new way that you could look and read John 13 through 17 is what is Jesus ultimately trying to produce in us?

It's joy. It's joyful obedience. It's fruitfulness. So why is he saying these things? What's his purpose? I've told you these things so that.

So that. That's a purpose word. Every word of scripture is useful. Every word of scripture is important. I've been telling you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.

Now I want you to see this is the first lesson here. The first thing I really want you to register is do you see how Jesus loves them?

Do you see how Jesus loves them? His love for his disciples. And you know he wasn't just talking to them.

[15 : 31] He didn't just pray for them. He said I'm not just praying for them. I'm praying for all those who would believe their message. He's talking to us. Do you see his purpose for us?

His goal for us? His aim for you? What does Jesus will for you? What does he want to see accomplished in your life?

He says I've told you these things so that you may my joy may be in you and your joy may be full. so what's his purpose for you? What does he want to see develop and grow in your life?

Overflowing joy. Overwhelming overflowing complete joy. Now that's love isn't it? That's love.

That's what he wants to see in you. That's what he wants you to experience. Now what is that?

That's love. That's good will isn't it? Loving people means you do want their joy.

[16:38] Now you don't want them to be happy in the wrong things but you do want them to be happy. So we look at our husband we look at our wife and if we love them a question that we continually are asking ourselves is what can I do to make them happy?

What can I do to please them? How can I make their lives more joyful? What can I do? Well why do we do everything that we do for our children? Well I think if we're asking them love what we're doing is we want to see them joyful.

We want to see them happy to experience that happiness. And so when will I and every Christian dad here you can echo and say amen to this when will I be the happiest dad of all?

I'll tell you when I will be the happiest dad of all. When all my children are standing before the Lord completely saturated and soaked in joy.

That I love Jesus and Jesus loves me and they're living in that joy. to see them standing before Jesus radiating with joy.

[17:59] That's what love wants. That's what parents want. Christian parents want for their children. Now look at Jesus. You've got to read this and you've got to understand where is this coming from?

This is coming from his overflowing heart. His burning heart within him. He's going away.

Circumstances are going to be difficult and painful but in all that he says he's saying I want you.

I want you to have my very joy in you. My joy in you. I don't want you sad.

I don't want you miserable. I don't want you in despair. I don't want you to feel beaten down and defeated. I want you to taste joy. Happiness.

I want you to not walk around with troubled hearts but with glad hearts. Now that's why he's been saying these things. That's why he's been talking. That they and us could experience that kind of joy.

[19:06] Now he's telling them things to believe and the things that he says believe this leads to joy and the things that he says now do this they lead to joy too.

And it's not some joy, some shallow joy, it's his joy. And now he's giving something of his very own to us. He's not closing off his heart, he's opening up his heart and he's saying what I want to do is take the joy that lives inside of me and put it right into you.

What else? What? How he loves us. he's saying the things that have brought me joy, the things that have brought me joy, I want to infect your heart with them so that you can't escape it.

That kind of joy, the joy that kept him going, the joy that was going to take him to the cross, and it was a full joy. There was nothing lacking. It was an overflowing joy.

Now is that impossible? Is that impossible for us as Christians to experience? Or should the run-of-the-mill Christian experience be, oh, woe is me.

[20:26] My life is hard, I am bad, there's no future for me. Should that be, is that what is the norm? Should that be what should be?

Well, is that impossible? Is it impossible to have that kind of joy? joy. Jesus thought it was very possible. Jesus thought that if I say these things to them and they believe them and they do them, they will experience this joy.

That's why he's been saying these things. Now, so that's the first really lesson I want you to get from this verse is I want you to see his love. See his love for you.

See his love for you and his purpose for you. He doesn't want you sad, he wants you happy. That speaks of his love. love. And Jesus loves you believer.

No father loved his children like he loves us. No husband has loved his bride like he loves his bride. And he loves you. And this is his purpose for you.

[21:30] He loves his people. love. Now, can I say if you're outside of Jesus Christ, if you've never taken a hold of him, you've never trusted yourself to him by faith, maybe you're standing back.

Maybe you're afraid. You're afraid of this Jesus. Afraid of what he might do if you come close. Afraid if you actually do what we sing and say, take my life, Lord, and let it be.

Maybe you're afraid to do that. Can I safely give him all my money? Can I safely give him all myself? Can I say to him, Lord, take my will, it will be yours, it won't be mine anymore?

I'm afraid to say that. You're afraid of what he might do to you, afraid that he might make your life miserable if you believe him, if you give yourself to him, if you repent of your sins and hand yourself over to him.

Jesus, now just listen, Jesus has been saying, I've been talking to you, I've been saying all these things to make you happy. You are afraid of someone who is committed to all of his people's joy. [22 : 54] You're afraid of someone who would fill you with joy. joy. Now, I'd say you're not doing right by yourself then. I'd say you're staying away from the very one who would give you everlasting, never-ending, unquenchable joy.

You're staying away from your own happiness. Now, that's not very smart, is it? And so, maybe if you're standing away and fearful, you need to see his heart for you, for all of his people. He doesn't pursue their misery. He doesn't pursue our misery. He pursues our joy. So, be your own friend. Be your own friend and come to Christ.

And there's a hundred people, at least in here right now, who would say he's good. He's sweet. He is a savior. He is a friend. He is my joy.

He is my all in all. I would never do life without him. He's made me that happy. So, I guess that's the first thing I want you to see is Jesus' heart, Jesus' love.

[24 : 00] He's not a miserable taskmaster. He is a radiantly good friend, good father, good husband, who wants to make his people happy.

I've been telling you these things so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. Now, here's the second lesson. There is no unquenchable, never-ending, everlasting joy without the things that Jesus has been saying.

There's no real lasting, overflowing, eternal kind of joy without appreciating and understanding the very things that Jesus has been saying.

Jesus is saying, here's how you get my happiness in you. Here's how you get to be a happier Christian. I'm telling you what to do.

I'm telling you what to believe. I'm telling you what to think about. I'm telling you what to live upon. I'm, this is extraordinarily practical.

[25 : 09] biblical. On my bookshelf, I have several books. One of them is, well, I have a lot of books, but I'm saying several books on this topic of unhappiness.

Because, whatever, four years ago or something, we did a Sunday school series on the happy Christian. One of these books is just a secular book.

It had some really good points in it. It's not perfect or anything, but its title was the how of happiness. How, how, the how of happiness. How, how people can just be happier.

Well, that's a secular version. And, to be honest, it's full of some really good stuff. Not perfect or anything, but some truth there. This is Jesus.

This is the Son of God. And, and he's not interested in making us 10% happier. And, he's not just making us interested in making us happier here and now for the next 30 or 40 years and then we die.

[26 : 12] This is the how of happiness for Jesus. Believe these things, he says. Do these things, he says. It's extraordinarily practical.

So, I want you to picture a great, big, indoor bathtub. It's not really even a bathtub. It's more of a pool. It's not like anything that any of you are going to have in your house.

Think of something that would come in a palace. A huge indoor bathtub. And, it's so big that you can swim in it. It's so big that you can go, it's right over your head.

It's, it's, it's wide. It's deep. It's that kind of bathtub. You have that picture. Now, all around that pool are faucets. Because, not one faucet is going to be enough.

We're going to need lots of faucets to fill up this big pool. Now, the pool is, is our heart. And, the water is joy.

[27 : 13] And, what Jesus is telling us, all of these things that he's talked about, they're different faucets. They're different ways of getting that water into our hearts.

And, now, the more you turn on, the more water is going to be flowing. And, the more fully you turn on each faucet, the more it's going to fill up.

So, the more we turn them turn on, and the more we turn them all on, the more our hearts fill up with joy. Now, that's what the picture is.

All these things are Jesus' way of filling us up with joy. If we neglect them, if we leave them unturned on, if we don't think about them, if we don't do them, we you won't have joy in you.

Your joy won't be full. Your heart will be bone dry. So, again, let's go back to where we sort of began, and I ask you to sort of register.

[28 : 15] Are you a happy Christian? Is your heart full? Are the faucets all flowing? Or, is your heart pretty dry?

water? Maybe just a little bit of water right down there at the drain, and it's evaporating away. Well, turn one of these on a little, and now some joy is flowing.

Turn two on, and there's more. Turn them all on, and now water's flowing in. Turn them all the way up, and pretty soon, you're going to be filled up with the very joy of Jesus overflowing in your heart. That's what Jesus is saying. I've done these things. I've said these things so that your joy would be full. And what I take away from that is, if we do them, if we believe them, then our hearts will be joyful, and if we neglect them, we won't have joy.

So you have Jesus' purpose to fill you with joy, and you have how he's going to do it by us believing and doing these things that he's talking about. Now, that leads us to what we're going to talk about for the rest of our time here this morning, and Lord willing, what we're going to talk about next week.

[29 : 33] We're going to talk about these different faucets, these different ways of getting the joy of the Lord into our hearts. And we're going to just start with the immediate context, and then we're going to work our way back.

So the immediate context. context. So first, just right in the context, look at verse 9. Here's our first faucet that we're just going to talk about.

Verse 9, as the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.

Joy faucet number one, fountain of joy number one is Jesus loves you, believer. Jesus loves you, believer, just like the Father loves him.

Jesus loves you, believer, like his Father loves him. So how does he love us? Well, like his Father loved him. That was the source of his joy.

[30 : 43] Jesus was joyful because he knew that his Father loved him, and it made him happy. And now that same thing becomes our source of joy.

So how does the Father love Jesus? There's a lot that we could say here. I just want to stick to what's in this text, though. How does the Father love Jesus?

Transparently. obviously, open-heartedly. The Father hid nothing from his Son. The Father's heart was wide open to his Son.

There was never a moment in eternity past or while Jesus walked upon the earth where there was a doubt that my Father loves me.

My Father loves me. Now, where do I get that? Where do I get this wide-open kind of heart? Well, look at verse 15. I no longer call you servants because the servant doesn't know his master's business.

[31 : 52] Instead, I've called you friends. For everything that I learned from my Father, I have made known to you. Do you see the chain there? The Father made all of these things known to the Son, and now the Son turns around and opens his heart to his people.

The Father hid nothing from me. The Father's heart was wide open, nothing secretive, nothing undisclosed, and he says, that's how I've loved you.

I've loved you like a friend. Like, you know, have you ever gone out to coffee with your best friend?

And you share everything together? And you walk away and you say, yeah, we love each other.

Or you go on a date with your wife, and you have open communication and you pour out your hearts to each other, and you say, yeah, we love each other. That's what Jesus is talking about.

I haven't hidden anything from you. There's no secret between friends. So Jesus has hidden nothing that would make us happy, and Jesus has hidden nothing you need to be blessed. Jesus says transparently, on the surface, openly, I love you.

[33 : 02] I love you. Do you feel that? See, there's nothing I can do, just as a man, as a preacher, to make that a reality to your heart.

But that's what the Spirit of God does. He pours out the love of God in your heart so that not only you know it intellectually, but it warms your own heart so you say, yeah, he loves me.

Jesus is no secret admirer. All of his cards, all of his flowers have his name on them, and he doesn't care who sees it. He wants the whole world to know I love you.

He's not a secret friend. He says to all, these are my friends. He says, I want them to be where I am, Father. I want them to be with me, and I don't care who knows it.

Hebrews talks about he's not ashamed to call us brothers. brothers. That's a public testimony. These are my brothers. These are my family. These are my friends. And in the last day, he's going to stand up in front of the whole world and in front of angels and own us and say, these are mine. [34 : 12] These are my friends. I love them. And he's going to make the whole world confess that he loves us.

There's not going to be any doubt that he loves us. Publicly, openly, transparently. That's how the father loved his son. That's how the father loved his son. He began his ministry. And you'll notice that the father makes apparent and abundantly transparent his love in key moments in his son's ministry.

So, you know, beginning something can be a little fearful experience. You wonder, am I on the right track? Am I doing the right thing? Taking those first steps can be difficult. Well, look at what the father does.

At that key moment in his ministry, at the baptism, a voice says, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased. Jesus hears this. This is my son.

[35 : 13] I love him. Then in the desert, Jesus is hungry and he's participating in a great spiritual battle and he just, and he defeats Satan and he's worn out and the father sent angels to comfort him.

Angels were not constantly appearing to Jesus, but they did appear at key times. The father made no secret of his love. love. Jesus knew his father loved him. He lived in that love.

He remained in that love. On the Mount of Transfiguration. And so now we're at a key, another key turning point in Jesus' life. We're rounding the corner here. We're going to the end.

The very next thing is we're going off to Jerusalem and I'm going to die. And by that point in his ministry, many people had left him. The days of super popularity are over.

The days of now I'm surrounded by enemies. Now I'm surrounded by people who, who once followed me, but now they've left me. That's what the Mount of Transfiguration is.

[36 : 17] And his father, and his father's voice again says loud and clear, this is my son whom I love. With him, I am well pleased. No one else seemed to be very pleased with him.

But the father wanted his son to know, I love you. I am so pleased with what you're doing. Now in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus is in great agony.

All of his disciples are sleeping. But there was one who was watching. And there was one who was loving him. And it says an angel appeared and helped him.

Jesus was clear. The father loves me. I know he loves me. And Jesus says, that's how I love you. My heart is wide open to you. We're friends. I'm hiding nothing. I'm keeping nothing back. I don't love you with any less love than the father loves me.

[37 : 20] I don't love you with any less sweetness or affection than the father loves me. I love you the way the father loves me. Now the father loves his son with a complacent love.

That's what we've been seeing. The complacent doesn't, I'm using that word in sort of the old fashioned way. It means with pleasure. Calm, which is with, and plache, which is pleasure.

That's how the father loves his son, with pleasure. So again and again, we've heard the father saying, this is my son with whom I'm well pleased. I get so much pleasure from him.

I delight in him. Now, now Jesus says, that's how I feel about you. To put it simply, Jesus likes you. Jesus likes you.

Jesus looks on you with pleasure. You say, I'm sinful. I'm so ugly in my sin.

[38 : 36] I don't, how can he say that? Well, that's what he says. I love you the way the father loves me.

And the father loved him with pleasure, with delight. Now, if you think about that, how can that not fill you up with joy?

That Jesus, the son of God, looks on his people, looks on you with pleasure. Oh, they've trusted me.

They love me. They follow me. And Song of Solomon, which is just in the book, Song of Solomon, which is ultimately a picture of the great husband and wife, Christ and his people.

The man, the husband, says to his bride, to his lover, how beautiful you are, my darling.

[39 : 45] Oh, how beautiful. Can you imagine Jesus saying that? Like a lily among thorns is my darling among the maidens.

There's no one else like you. In my eye, all everyone else is a thorn and you're a beautiful flower. He says, my dove is in the clefts of the rock and the hiding places on the mountainside.

She's hiding. She's hidden away. And what does he want? He says, show me your face. Let me hear your voice. For your voice is sweet and your face is lovely.

Now, that is how husbands and wives are meant to feel towards each other. That's what Song of Solomon is teaching. Now, why? Why should we feel that way about our spouse?

Why should we say things like that to our spouse? Why should we delight in each other like that? It's because ultimately that's how Christ and his church and his people feel about each other.

[40 : 56] It is not a one-way street of affection from us to him. It is a two ways of we delight in him and he delights in us. Now, that's how Christ feels about you.

So let the world scorn you. Jesus loves you. Let the world look down on you. What does that matter? If Jesus is wide open, pleased with you.

I'm precious to him. I'm precious to him. I am his Rachel. He's my Jacob.

I'm his Sarah. He's my Abraham. I am his Rebecca. He's my Isaac. He went to a far-off country and he worked very hard for me. And he suffered a lot for me and for you.

You are his joy. He paid a high price for you. And that doesn't make you a hassle. That makes you a prize.

[42 : 02] Treasures are not less loved because they took a lot of work to dig out of the ground. They're more loved. They're more valued for the prices are paid for them.

The cross doesn't make us less valuable, less precious, less desirable to Jesus. It makes us more desirable, more love, more prize, more precious.

I just want you to think about that. The next thing on the agenda, on the great redemptive agenda, is the marriage supper of the Lamb.

When he takes his, when he's not going to be satisfied to be away from us any longer and he takes us into his home to live with him forever. Now, what I want to say is, we are sad.

We are sad because we don't think about his love. We are sad because we doubt his love.

[43 : 07] We are sad because this faucet, this knob is just barely trickling out. And if we were to open it up, our hearts would fill with joy.

We are sad because we doubt his love. But he says, I'm telling you these things. I am telling you these things so that you can know.

So that you can have my joy in you. This is me to you, he says. I'm telling you this. I'm not hiding it. I want you to be happy, so believe it.

And then there's something to do. There's something to do. Now remain in my love. Abide in my love. Live in my love, he says. Stay in it. Don't doubt it.

Don't doubt it. Don't let anything cloud over the things that I've said. Don't let anything hinder your appreciation of it. And this is where he says, Obey my commands.

[44 : 13] Verse 10, If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love. And we need to be very clear here. He's not saying that he loves us because we obey his commands, although in a certain way that's true.

He says, Obey my commands, and then you will remain in my love. What he's talking about is our experience of that love. What he's talking about is the open flow of communications.

Where we're not quenching the spirit. The spirit has full reign in us to pour out the love of God. And so disobedience and a dirty conscience hides his face.

And he says, I don't want anything to hide my smile from you. His love from us. And so he says, Obey my commands. Not so that I will love you, but so that you'll keep living in light of it.

You know, he can love us all we want, but if we're living in disobedience and sin and shame, then our own consciences will block out the sun.

[45 : 20] We'll create an eclipse. We'll stop up the fountain and no joy will come in. And so Jesus says, Obey me. Not so that I will love you, but so that you can know my love for you and live in it.

So that your joy may be full. So there's something to believe that he loves me. And then there's something to do to keep in the light of it.

Abide in my love. Abide in my love. Think of the Apostle John. Now here, he was this disciple that more than any other talked about love.

Because here he is talking about it in his own gospel. This is what I want to tell you. He talks about it in 1 John and 2 John and 3 John. How did he, here's a disciple that knew what it was to abide in

the love of Jesus.

Well, how did he talk about himself? Well, you never hear a reference to John in John's writing. You always hear this reference of the disciple that Jesus loved.

[46 : 30] That's who he was. That was his own identity. I'm the disciple that Jesus loved. John abided in.

John lived in the love of Jesus. There's no reason. There's no reason you can't say the same. I am Jason, the disciple Jesus loves. How can I say that? Well, because Jesus died for me as much as he did for John.

He died for you, believer, as much as he died for John. And he loves me as much as he loves John. So how can I live in sadness if he loves me?

If I'm precious to him? If I'm treasured? If I'm valued? So brothers and sisters, those are the first, just the first two faucets. Jesus loves you like the Father loves him.

[47 : 40] Now live in his love. So you turn it on. You believe in it. And then you keep it on. You keep that love flowing. You meditate on it. You fill up your heart with it.

And maybe you need to stop. There are times in my life, and I'm sure there is times in your life, when really you need to say, okay, this is the situation.

I'm not doing well. My joy is gone. And to keep going is not to get better.

It's just to prolong the misery, not deal with something. And so maybe, really, maybe you're there. You need to stop everything. And you need to go off by yourself, with your Bible, with a notebook, and circle around this truth again, and circle around it again and again.

He loves me. How does he love me? I'm going to write that down. How does he love me? I'm going to write it all down. He loves me.

[48 : 48] How do I see it? Oh, I see it at the cross. I see it here. I see it in these promises. I see it in these verses. I see it here. And I'm going to write it all down. And he loves me.

What's hiding his love from me? Why am I not experiencing it? Do I have, am I infatuated with something else? Am I in love with something else?

What's hiding his love from me? Oh, he loves me. Then maybe you go to the book of Song of Solomon. It's in our Bibles. And you read yourself and you read Jesus into it because I think he is there and you're there in the background, if not in the foreground.

He's talking about, ultimately, the ultimate marriage. And so maybe you need to get, like, on it, just get away. And get your Bible and get a notebook, get pen, get paper, and then turn this faucet on. And you stay there and you leave that faucet on until the Spirit fills your heart with joy. You read the love letters of the Son of God to you until they're new again, until they're fresh again, until you're tasting again, until you're abiding in his love.

[50 : 15] Again, I already said this, but there's little that I can do as a pastor. I can't reach into your hearts. But there is one who can.

The Spirit of God. And you can pray, Lord, here I am. My tub is dry. My heart is dry. Fill me with your love.

Fill me with this joy. So you ask him to turn the faucets on. And then you ask him to turn them all the way on. And then you watch your heart fill up with joy.

May God's Spirit do that for you, brothers and sisters. That's been my prayer this week. That God's Spirit would do what I can't do. That he would fill your hearts with joy.

That you would taste and see again that the Lord is good. you'll start living in line with that. That your joy might be full.

[51 : 18] Let's pray. Our Lord Jesus, we thank you for these sweet and precious words. Spirit of God, please impress them upon us.

Fill our hearts with joy for your name's sake. Because your joy is our strength. Your joy is the power that we need to say no to sin. Your joy is the power that we need to be zealous for righteousness. Your joy is what helps us to love one another and to put away selfishness. If we've neglected you, please forgive us.

if we need to take some serious time alone and by ourselves, create that time for us and help us to do it.

Keep the evil one from picking up the seeds of your word instead of letting them bear fruit. I pray that we would bear much fruit for Jesus, for his pleasure, for his glory.

[52 : 31] Amen. Amen.