**Unspeakable Joy – Christmas 2022**

**Joy: The Culture of the Kingdom: Part 2**

December 11, 2022

Rev. Dr. Tony Soldano

# SERMON DESCRIPTION

The Kingdom of God is not about what you consume, but rather, what is produced in you. The substance of the Kingdom is not about eating and drinking but about doing the right, experiencing peace, and having the fullness of joy.

# SERMON QUESTIONS & OBJECTIVES

1. What do they need to know?
* The culture of the Kingdom of God is joy.
1. Why do they need to know it?
* God wants His people to experience His joy rather than the pleasures of the world.
1. How should we apply it?
* The follower of Christ must live and be led by the Spirit of God.

# MAIN PASSAGE

**Romans 14:17-19**

… 17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men. 19 Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

**The Gospel Of The Kingdom Shall Be Preached In All The World**

**Matthew 24:14**

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

# BACKGROUND OF THE PASSAGE

The entire chapter deals with believers living out their faith with one another; the idea of being right with God and acceptable to Him. But how is this really achieved? There is always a great tension between grace and works. For example, the ongoing debate regarding certain food and drink that defiles as being a method that creates acceptance with God has no impact of Kingdom living. In fact, the Kingdom is not advanced by what is consumed but rather what is produced in the heart. In other words, it is not an outward work but rather an inward one.

The outward battles always cause strife and contention because there can be no agreement.

# OPENING LINE

*Father desires for His children to live in the fullness of joy, after all, it is the culture of the Kingdom.*

# INTRODUCTION

***Great news that will bring great joy!***

# CENTRAL TRUTH

The Kingdom of God is not about what goes into you but rather what is produce from you

* This is what the Kingdom is all about – righteousness, peace, and joy in the person of the Holy Spirit
* It is through the person of the Holy Spirit that we experience the fulness of the Kingdom of God – this is what it is all about.

# MAIN POINTS

***The Kingdom of God is not what goes into you, but rather what is produced in you.***

**Have a Kingdom mindset** - A Kingdom mindset is bigger than anyone of us and the Gospel of the Kingdom **(the rule and reign of Christ)** must be preached into all the world and then the end will come. A Kingdom mindset directs our focus into His big picture—harvesting the world for our King.

Why was the early church full of joy? They had no money no influence no resources, no plan, and no political power.

**Acts 2:46-47**

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

**Statistics**

* 40% of the world is unreached by the Gospel
* Of the approximately 8 billion people on Earth, about 3.2 billion are considered unreached or least reached.
* More than 7,000 people groups are classified as unreached. That's **more than 40%** of the total population.

**Quote**

The subjects of the kingdom are not intended to be food faddists, gourmets, or wine connoisseurs. They should be characterized by lives of practical **righteousness**, by dispositions of **peace** and harmony, and by mind-sets of **joy in the Holy Spirit**. *~Believer’s Bible commentary*

1. **RIGHTEOUNESS: Doing the right thing, produces peace**
	1. When we do the right thing (God’s standard), we will experience peace of mind, heart, and soul.
	2. In Christ, the believer is made righteous by faith in Christ Jesus
* However, to live righteously, is an entirely different thing, as it requires intentionality, and obeying the word of God and His moral standards
* This is the true religion and faith of the Bible
* It is God’s image stamped on the heart.
	1. Do the right thing and take the right actions
* Leadership philosophy: What is the right thing to do?
* After establishing the right thing, everything else flows from there.

* 1. Righteousness: means to be just; the quality of being right; conformity to the revealed will of God. It declares the believer righteous and imputes it to them
* **2Corinthians 5:21** For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
* **Psalms 45:6-7** (NIV) “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. 7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy”.
1. **PEACE - Experiencing the peace of God, allows believers to live in harmony**
	1. The peace that is spoken of here is on the earth, but it originates in Heaven.
* It is the concept that believers experience the peace of God amongst themselves and live in unity and harmony
	1. Christ followers experience peace because they have the Prince of Peace in their lives and in their midst
* The decisions that are grounded and righteous produce an expression of overwhelming calm within the believer’s soul
	1. The Apostle James revealed where wars originate:
* **Matthew 24:14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.
	1. ***When we have righteousness, we have peace***

* 1. The peace that the believer experiences surpass all understanding – particularly, it cannot be explained by just common sense because it is a fruit of the Spirit
	2. Peace versus Relief:
* Sin provides “relief” but not peace
* At times, people experience, a sense of great relief because they confuse this emotion for peace. In reality, we have given in to contrary lifestyles, and therefore, there is no longer the struggle.
1. **JOY - The fullness of joy is the expression of faith in Christ**
	1. The idea and concept of Christians living in joy amongst themselves

* 1. Reasons why we experience joy:
* When we mature as believers – there is joy in growth

* 1. The idea that the believer in Christ is not succumbed to discouragement and despair, but rather overcome by the joy of the Lord
	2. ***There is a clear difference in rejoicing in God and the pleasures that the world tries to provide***
* The world system is to create pleasure
* Live in the world, but do not be part of it
* Do not submit to the pleasures of the culture.

**Pray For Joy**

**John 16:23-24 (NASB)**

“In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. 24“Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, **so that your joy may be made full.**

**Obey To Receive Joy**

**John 15:7-11 (NASB)**

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8“My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. 9“Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. 10“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. 11“**These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.**

Again, Jesus tells us to pray. He tells us to abide in His love by keeping His commandments. Notice Jesus says, His joy may be in us. He is the source.

**We Get Joy From Pointing Others To God**

**1Thessalonians 2:19-20 (NASB)**

For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy.

* Paul says they are his joy, his crown. He allowed God to use him to share the Gospel with them.

**3John 1:3-4 (NASB)**

**3** For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is*,* how you are walking in truth. **4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.** Again, John has joy when he sees how God has used him to influence others positively for God.

**We Get Joy from Our Expected Rewards**

**Luke 6:20-23 (NASB)**

And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21“Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed *are* you who weep now, for you shall laugh. 22“Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. **23“Be glad in that day and leap for joy*,* for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets.**

**Joy in Times of Trouble – Only from God**

 **2Corinthians 7:4-6 (NASB)**

Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; **I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction.** 5For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within. 6But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus; …

1. **In the Holy Spirit**
	1. The Kingdom is in the person of Holy Spirit, therefore, we must live and move and walk in the Spirit of God
	2. **Walking by the Spirit produces the fruit of joy
	Galatians 5:13-25**
* We must be led by the Spirit
* We must be people of the Spirit
	1. God is greater than His own Kingdom
	2. He is the Divine Guest that is invited into the relationships of believers

* 1. 59% of the church does not believe in the work and person of Holy Spirit
	2. Holy Spirit is the river that flows from the Throne of God:
* **Psalm 46:4** There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain the difference between being righteous in Christ and living righteously.
2. Provide three examples from the Scriptures on how relief and peace are different.
3. What does Jesus mean when He says, “Christians will experience the fulness of joy”?
4. Give five examples on how the believer can live and move in the Spirit of God.
5. Why do Christians fail to live in peace, unity, and harmony if Christ has provided this from Heaven?
6. Provide in depth detail of the difference between God’s joy and the pleasures that the world tries to create.
7. Provide in depth detail of the concept that, ‘there is a difference between peace and relief’.