

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of 1John

Chapter 2- John's Declaration **1John 1:1-4**

17. The Person of Jesus Christ Part 13

WAOY Tuesday 05/01/07; WOSM Friday 10/17/08; WOSM Tuesday 10/25/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse “journey” through the Epistle of 1John and today we are going to continue to look at “The Declaration of the Apostle John” as listed in **1John 1:1-4**- so let's read those verses again together.

1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life —

2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us —

3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

Now we have been going over the apostolic declaration of John over the last several broadcasts and today I want to look closely at verse 4:

These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

Beloved, we must understand that eternal joy is the ultimate goal of all believers. But as we discuss this joy today- I want to go over the characteristics of the kind of joy that John is speaking about in this fourth verse. John says here that the purpose of all that he has said so far in the first four verses of this great Epistle is so that our joy may be full.

Now just who is John talking about? Is John speaking of the population of the world at large in this verse? Did John write these

things to those who do not know God; or who do not love God? Did John write these words to those who have rejected Jesus Christ? No, he does not. Like all of the Epistles in the Bible, **1John** was not written to the lost. This Book was written to the saved; to the Church; to those who have had their black hearts washed in Red Blood and have been made whiter than snow.

Most lost people seldom, if ever, read the Bible and they would never desire to actually study it. This is one of the characteristics of their lost condition- God- and the things of God are foolishness to them. Look with me at **1Corinthians 2:14**:

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

Lost people cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God because their minds are in enmity with God. So, the Bible says here that all lost people operate in open and hostile rebellion to God and so they are not concerned at all with the things of God. So, the joy which John writes about here in verse 4 is for those who are saved and is reserved solely and only for those who are born again.

Lost people can operate in some form of temporary joy and in some degree of temporary happiness- even in their lost condition- a child's smile; a good meal; love between husband and wife- but that type of joy is only temporary and is nothing compared with the deep and profound joy that comes from being a child of God. Lost people know nothing of this kind of joy that John is describing here.

Now notice also that John says here that our joy should be full. The word that was translated into English as "full" in verse 4, comes from the Greek word, *pleroo*, which means: *to fill out; to make complete; to make perfect and to accomplish an end.*

So, we can see that this kind of joy that comes from you and me learning and obeying the words that John wrote here is not a shallow or temporary joy- but a rich; full joy that grows and becomes deeper and greater with every moment that we spend with Jesus.

Now we have to understand that all human joy that exists on earth is not of God. It is sensual, selfish, and worldly joy that is based on self- gratification and lust. That joy is totally dependent on the

external circumstances and situations that go on all around us. So, because of that- that kind of joy is very fleeting at best.

Most joy that people experience only comes when all is well with the individual. For example, if you get a raise on the job; or some good thing comes your way- then joy follows. But if you don't get that raise; or some bad thing comes your way- then that shallow carnal joy is hard to find.

It is here that I want to make a couple of distinctions. We tend to think that happiness is good, and that unhappiness is bad but that is not always the case. And there is a distinction between human happiness and godly joy. So, let's look at these distinctions for a moment.

Happiness that is based in that which is right and that which is godly is fine- but we all know that we can achieve human happiness from things that are wrong too- and that type of happiness is not good at all. This is why we must base right and wrong on what Scripture says and not base right and wrong simply on whether or not it makes us happy.

Because we are fallen creatures- we have the ability to feel very good about something and think that it is just wonderful- when in fact it very well could be evil in God's sight. And that is because the reliability and trustworthiness of our emotions and heart and even our consciences is only as good as what they have been feeding on.

For example- if you are engaged in steady diet of sinful television programming; and evil music; and if you get your information from those who do not serve God- then your heart and your emotions and even your conscience is feeding on things that are going to warp your ability to properly discern right and wrong from a biblical standpoint.

More than any of the other inventions of man- television and the internet have served to make sin look attractive and today people who say they are saved routinely watch things that promote ideals and take stands that are in direct conflict with what the Bible says. The internet has become a playground for sin and evil to become more and more accepted and relied upon in our daily lives.

Make no mistake about it- it is not hard- it is *impossible* for God's people to have a single eye and a clear conscience which is tuned into the things of God and continue to feed on most of what is coming through the television and computer screens today. But to be a genuine

Christian and to have genuine godly joy *requires* that we are separated from the world.

Human happiness is all about what makes us feel better; what brings us satisfaction; what allows us to become richer or better or to have more power or to get what we desire. So, all human happiness is based upon fulfilling those selfish; self-centered; and human desires that most of the time are not even godly.

For example, we can achieve human happiness because we bought a new car or got that new motorcycle or because we just bought a new house or because we just left a wife and got a new girlfriend. We can actually feel real good about all of these things even though some or all of them may well be wrong.

For example- it certainly isn't wrong to get a new car or a new motorcycle, or even a new house- but if in fact we bought those things when we have not been faithful to God with our money- then any happiness that we achieved by buying those things is not of God- because we should never feel happy about robbing God of what belongs to Him- even if we personally benefit from it.

So, because of our depraved condition- human beings have the capacity to be happy- and be at odds with God at the same time. We can achieve personal satisfaction and actually feel content and joyful- while we are living and acting in ways that Scripture condemns. I have met people who tell me that they are very happy and feel that things are really going their way while at the very moment they are shacking up with someone and living in sin. So, in reality- any happiness; any satisfaction that those people are experiencing from their sin is *not* from God and is *not* a good thing at all.

I will tell you that it is a blessing from God when we feel horrible and very unhappy when we are sinning against the Lord. That lack of happiness over our sin shows that our hearts are not hard, and that God is still dealing with us. But when anyone can sin with abandon and feel no sorrow at all- it is not because what they are doing is okay- it is because when they have sinned against God so long without surrendering to the Spirit's leading to repent- their consciences are seared with a hot iron and the heart of that individual is no longer convicted- and that is truly one of the most frightening places that anyone can get into.

But if our mind and heart and eyes and ears are feeding on God's Word and godly music and wholesome conversations and spiritual fellowship- then our hearts and consciences are trained and tempered by Faith and Scripture and are much more reliable and trustworthy to guide us correctly.

So, I want to make it clear that the joy that John is speaking about in verse 4 is not the self- centered joy that exists only through gratifying ourselves- but this joy; this true joy; this everlasting joy is based upon a selfless and a surrendered heart, mind and will to the Lord Jesus Christ and a humble submission to the Word of God.

Only through complete surrender can we ever achieve this joy. True joy- lasting joy; godly joy; everlasting joy comes only through abandoning ourselves to a holy walk with God. Now look very carefully how John phrased this in verse 4:

These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

John says here that our full joy is linked with the words that John wrote here in this Epistle. So, the only way for any of us to obtain this true and lasting joy is by knowing and loving and obeying the words that John wrote right here.

And this is a very key point, because in our study of **1John**, we will discover that this Epistle gives us several tests that will prove whether we are really saved or just simply deceived. This Truth about where we stand with God is so important for us because the assurance that the Holy Spirit always brings to the truly born again soul will lead us right into this glorious joy.

I am convinced beloved, that one of the main attributes of genuine revival is that a whole lot of people who thought they were saved find out that they were not. By the full preaching of the full Word of God- our position in or out of Christ will become very clear to us and that knowledge will produce the results that we say that we all want. When someone who *thinks* they are saved, finds out that he doesn't have the characteristics that John says that saved people always have- then the truth that he is really not saved after all will drive him to his knees and to a true repentance and genuine Salvation. Conversely, when the Bible is taught and preached in its fullness- those who are truly saved will see that the fruit that John says must be in them is in fact in them

and from the knowledge of that Truth- these saved souls will receive great assurance of that Salvation and they will enter into a rejoicing like they have never known.

A lie can never bring true joy. Deception doesn't produce lasting joy. Thinking something is true when it isn't doesn't make it true. Our Salvation must be true and real and genuine if joy is to follow.

It is counter-productive, brothers and sisters, to everything we say we believe when we give comfort to lost people who think they are saved. Only Truth can pierce through emotions and feelings and deception to uncover the heart. And we have to be willing to risk offending them in order that the Truth of their lost condition will become clear to them so that they can truly be saved and know the fullness of joy.

What benefit is there in us bending over backward and dulling the edge of the sword in order not to offend someone who is lost if the net result of our actions is that lost people think that they are saved? How is God glorified in that? How is that helping anybody?

1John is an excellent tool that God has given to us that we can use to dig down deep into our hearts and find out who is really saved and who is not and by that- we can enter into the real joy of the Lord. Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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