

# First Baptist Church Smiths Falls

April 8, 2018 Theme: Joy

**Scripture Reading:** Philippians 2:1-11

1 ¶ If [there be] therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, 2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, [being] of one accord, of one mind. 3 [Let] nothing [be done] through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth; 11 And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**Message:** "How Majestic His Name."

a) INTRO -- STORY of TIM'S BIRTH

- The sun was just coming up on that crisp, cool October morning.

The air was charged with electricity. Something great was about to happen. I stood there in my Hospital greens, witnessing the greatest event which I have ever seen. It all happened so fast in the end -- after nine months waiting (that is nine months going on

nine years) -- suddenly I saw my son's small face emerge. In just a few more seconds, I was holding a beautiful gift from God. And there was joy -- incredible joy! I found out how hard it was to cry with a face mask on, and how heavy one's legs are when the joy of the moment makes everything seem unreal. Time moved at a different pace. Nothing was real, as we floated on the wave of the joy in God's Majesty. I have had the opportunity of seeing the birth of one more son, and coming home with three precious daughter. I have been a man of great joy and overflowing blessings.

- The joy of life is a great gift from God. Joy itself is one of God's greatest gifts to His beloved people. Today, let's talk about the joy of God, and make ourselves available to accept and then share it.

Part 1: God's Joy:

- Joy. It is one of God's greatest gifts. The Bible is full of stories where joy is everywhere -- times when people have given themselves to God and felt outrageous joy as they relish in God's Majesty.
- Think about the joy of Adam and Eve in the garden -- They had

such peace and fellowship with God and with the creation around them. Think about the joy of the freed tribes of Israelites after the Pharaoh has been stopped at the Red Sea -- they escaped when disaster fell upon their evil pursuer instead of them. Or the joy of King David as he saw God give him victory after victory in battle after battle. Or King Solomon as he saw God build the Israelite empire and was the envy of every leader in the known world.

Think about the joy of the Apostle Paul in seeing the gospel spread under his watchful care. The Bible is full of accounts of joy -- they may have been short lived -- but the ecstasy which people who followed God's Word and gave God the praise which He deserved was pure joy.

- On this the Sunday after Easter, we can recall the one time which Jesus fully allowed Himself to relish in the joy of God, and the joy of being fully alive. I refer to the Sunday before He arose, to Palm Sunday, were Jesus asked His disciples to bring to Him a borrowed young white colt -- a sign of triumph. As the people lined the streets, in came Jesus, joyous and triumphant! And there was joy

-- great joy. The people cried out at the sight of the Lord. The children sang out. Everyone was so happy. They spread out a carpet of palm leaves and even their own cloaks on the road ahead of Jesus, and sang out "Hosanna!" a Hebrew word of reverent joy from the Psalms. We cannot quite comprehend the incredible joy of that moment until we hear Christ's own words -- the words He spoke saying that if the people were to try to be silent, even the rocks would cry out "Hosanna" -- a rock (Luke 19:40). The joy was that great that day that a rock would respond to Christ's presence.

- This is the joy of Easter -- the joy not only of the triumphal entry, but of a confused group of followers of the Lord who, just one week later, were clinging together out of fear and for security until they find out that Jesus is alive on Easter Sunday. They find out that He has risen (pause). Can you stop for just a few seconds, and allow yourself to imagine the joy when Jesus first appears to them? Think about that great moment when they find out that it is true! That wonderful time when they first see the risen Jesus, and realize

that it really is Jesus standing suddenly in their midst, talking to them, giving them encouragement, and instructions! Think about that wonderful moment of the resurrection of Jesus, the time when He showed them that He was alive! All of the Joy of God's creatures celebrating the risen Christ, Jesus. In God's Majesty there is great JOY.

## 2) Being available for God's Joy

- God's joy is right there, right here, all around and about you. But we must keep ourselves available for God's joy. A Christian comedian said that some Christians are going around telling others that they have the joy of the Lord, but that they forgot to tell their own face.
- Jesus said that joy is like the treasure which is planted in a field. Let me read to you the words of Jesus from Matthew 13:44: *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."*
- What an interesting parable, indeed! The treasure was planted

- there in that field to keep it safe, but something happened. It is forgotten. Along comes a stranger who finds it. He obviously has the right to plant the field, and while working there it is! Buried treasure. But he does not steal it. Instead he purchases the field. Now, honestly, don't we all have that fantasy -- especially as kids -- playing pirates or treasure hunters -- the pirates have left a treasure chest somewhere, and the search is on to find it. Or an object is unexpectedly found in the yard. And suddenly the imagination soars as it is dug out, and open it -- the thrill of discover -- the triumph of the unknown. I recall that when we lived in Timmins we were told that we owned one-shovel's depth of soil on our yard, but if we found any gold any deeper, it belonged to the big gold companies that mined the area. Talk about wanting to do some digging!
- It must have been so exciting for that man from this parable. He experienced the joy of discovery! So, says Jesus, *"When a man found it, he hides it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."* Imagine that joy!

- To find the treasure of knowing God is even greater joy. To have the Lord in your life is the greatest joy you will ever know. To be a child of the King is to have joy even when times are tough, when oppression and troubles threaten to overwhelm you.
- Are you looking for God's treasures? The Joy of God's majesty is out there. It is all around and about us. It is up to us to recognize it -- to see it as joy, as the joy of the Lord.
- Paul knew this as he says: Phil 2 *"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Looking not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus."*
- Paul makes it clear that Jesus will be full of joy when we believers have a like-mindedness -- an attitude which is the same as Jesus.

This is the joy of Jesus. This is the joy which we should try to attain. The way to be fully available for God's joy to be like-minded of Christ

### 3) Being instrument's of God's Joy

- Do you recall the story of Esther in the Bible? Queen Esther found a way to be an instrument of God's joy. It was Esther's role to come before the king and be a leader of her people. And as the Hebrew people were released from their bondage, there was joy. Esther 9:22 says (NIV): *"...as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor."*
- It is little wonder that Esther as one of the great models of the Bible. She lead her people to great joy. She was a strong leader. She stood up to the king, her husband -- knowing the consequences could have been her death -- risking her life and her status for what she thoroughly believed was right according to God's majestic

plan.

- AND, by doing what was right, all the people rejoiced -- rejoiced, as the passage says, with great joy. This joy is remembered for two weeks in the feast of Purim, and joy flowed because Esther allowed herself to be an instrument of God's joy.
- Not only do we have to see God's joy, and be available to God's joy -- but we, all of us, also must work to be instruments of God's joy -- like Esther. Sometimes we have to work to be part of God's joy. Sometimes we have to look for ways to be instruments for God's joy in order to fully experience His joy. That may mean doing service work for God, such as the work of this church, or an organization which represents Christ. It may mean talking to your neighbour when you really don't have time. It may mean standing-up for what you believe in the face of incredible odds. It may mean risking beyond what feels comfortable -- but THERE IS God's joy, the joy that comes from obeying and serving God. Psalm 100 tells us to make a joyful noise to the Lord. Let's be instruments of God's joy to a hurting and tired world.

Conclusion:

- Seeing God's joy, being available to receive God's joy, and being instruments of God's joy, these are all a part of the Joy of God, made complete in our risen saviour Jesus Christ
- And there will come a day, a great day, a day of great joy -- the day when Christ returns -- the day of ultimate joy when we all see How Majestic God's name is.