

**A Quest for More Series - Part 5**  
**“More of God’s Joy”**  
*Pastor Dale Campfield – Eastgate Community Church*  
*January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010*

**Intro:**

**Matt 28:19** “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

**ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve**

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

We are now ten days into our 40 days of fasting and prayer. How’s it going? Have you noticed a difference in your habits? Have you noticed a difference in the practicalities of feeling the presence of God in your life? Are things different?

Last week talked about having MORE of God. Not more of what He can do for us, but more of Him. We dealt with MORE of the PRESENCE of God on week one. Two weeks ago we dealt with God’s LOVE, 2 weeks ago Dr. Badu Bediako from Ghana, Africa ministered on God’s PEACE. Last week we talked about God’s POWER through the Holy Spirit.

Today, we’ll be talking about MORE of GOD’S JOY.

There are many names for God mentioned in the Bible...One of the names for God is found in Psalms 3:4 in the Hebrew...

**Psalms 3:4** (NLT)

“I will go to God – the Source of all my joy.”

***El Simchathgali*** = **“I am the God of exceeding joy”**

- I am the God who knows how to party.
- I am the God of overflowing, abundant joy.
- God doesn’t represent joy – He is Joy! All JOY comes from Him!
- Therefore, if I am “cheek to cheek” with God – I’ll experience His Joy!

My bride and I have a song we sing to you...

### **Song: I'm so Happy...Tell me Why Your Happy**

I'm so happy. Tell me why you're happy.  
I'm so happy. Won't you tell me why?  
I'm so happy. Tell me why you're happy, so I can be happy too.

Here's the reason. What's the reason?  
Here's the reason why I'm happy today.

Jesus died to save me, now He lives within me.  
That is why I'm happy today, today.  
That is why I'm happy today.

As we begin...join with me in looking at a few of the old kids songs that we use to sing. I'm not sure if you'll know these or not? But I'll bet the kids here today, in that it's our Family Celebration Sunday Service, will know these songs. How about you join with me in singing...(after we look at three questions and a discussion about happiness and joy.)

### **Have you ever noticed how much the Bible talks about Joy?**

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" – Romans 14:17

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." – Romans 15:13

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." – Galatians 5:22

### **1 Thessalonians 5:16**

"Be joyful always."

### **HOW DO YOU DO THAT WHEN LIFE ISN'T ALWAYS JOYFUL?**

**The word "joy" is found or related to 259 times in the Bible.**

But I believe that *joy* is terribly misunderstood ... we bandy it about constantly, but don't understand it much. At least from a biblical perspective, *joy* is decidedly not the same as *happiness* ...

## The difference between Happiness and Joy

- *Happiness* is a state of the mind ... *joy* is a state of the soul.
- *Happiness* is circumstantial ... *joy* can be experienced irrespective of circumstances.
- *Happiness* is fleeting, ethereal ... *joy* can be more constant.
- *Happiness* is a by-product of being entertained... *joy* is a fruit of the Spirit.

You've got to look at a word closely sometimes.

The word "joy" deserves a closer look. We know how to spell it but when you first look at the word without a closer look it's easy to write off joy as something that's just not possible for our lives. We look at a verse like **1 Thessalonians 5:16** "*Always be joyful.*" We look at a verse like that and if you've had a particularly tough week, be honest, when you hear a verse like that doesn't it bug you? Always be joyful? I had a tough week! I don't want to always be joyful. I'm not sure I can always be joyful.

For some of you, because of the kind of week you had, you came in feeling bad. You had a rotten week. You feel rotten you don't have any joy. You have a right to feel that way and nobody's going to take it away from you.

You look at the people down in Haiti for the past few weeks; it's tough to find any joy in the circumstances that now surround their lives.

The fact is He told us joy can happen even here, right now. Even in that kind of a world. Even in your kind of a world joy can happen. Because of the kind of the world that we live in, you can choose to be a discouraged person because there's a lot to be discouraged about. You could choose to be an angry person. There's a lot to be angry about in this world. You could choose to be a cynical person. There's a lot to be cynical about.

You may have heard someone say before, joy is a choice it doesn't just happen in our lives. It's something that must be chosen in our lives. The question I've got is How? How do you choose it? It's obviously not just automatic. Even those of you who have been believers for quite some time who come to church a lot realize that you don't automatically become joyful because you read the Bible more or pray more or even come to church more. How does it happen? Do you work harder at it? If it works that way the most joyful people in the world would be workaholics and that doesn't work. Can you lie yourself into it and just pretend that everything is ok? There are some people who think they're joyful but they're just blissfully unaware. There are people like that in life. If they really knew what was coming their way... If joy is going to work it has to work in a real world with real problems. Do I have to wait until I win the lottery to have one in a million chance at joy?

How do you choose joy? If your life were a map, and the big "You are here" arrow points to maybe ordinary life, routine, maybe boring life, maybe for you it's a painful difficult life. That's where you are right now. And there's a dot over there that says "Joy". The question is how do I get from here to there? How does that happen in our lives? We've got to focus on what only God can do, the joy that He can bring.

According to Dr. David Myers in his research for the book Pursuit of Happiness he discovered that over the past seventeen years there have been 80,000 research projects done on depression in the United States. While at the same time there have been only 400 research projects done on joy. It's easy to focus on the negative. But when you begin to focus on the positive, on the joy that God can bring, you see how you can move from where you are to genuine joy in this real world.

## 3 Questions Concerning Joy

**Q. What does God's joy do? A. It gives me strength.**

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**Psalm 28:7, Nehemiah 8:10** *"The joy of the Lord is my strength."*

***Song: The Joy of the Lord is My Strength***

Vs. 1

The joy of the LORD is my strength  
The joy of the LORD is my strength  
The joy of the LORD is my strength  
The joy of the LORD is my strength.

Vs. 2

He gives me living water and I thirst no more  
He gives me living water and I thirst no more  
He gives me living water and I thirst no more  
For the joy of the LORD is my strength

Vs. 3

If you want joy you must jump for it..  
If you want joy you must jump for it..  
If you want joy you must jump for it..  
For the joy of the LORD is my strength

**Q. Where is God's joy? A. Down in our hearts, out of a relationship with God.**

**Illus:** Pepsi and mentos, what joy should do inside of you... come out.  
We are the pop.... God's joy is the mento... The results... everyone gets wet with joy!

**Illus:** Paul and Silas worshipping in prison

***Song: I've got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy down in my heart.***

Vs. 1: I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart.  
Where? Down in my heart!  
Where? Down in my heart!  
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart,  
Where? Down in my heart!

Chorus: And I'm so happy. So very happy!  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.  
And I'm so happy so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart!

Vs. 2: And if the Devil doesn't like it he can sit on a tack.  
OUCH. Sit on a tack.  
OUCH. Sit on a tack.  
And if the Devil doesn't like it he can sit on a tack  
Sit on a tack today.

Chorus: And I'm so happy. So very happy!  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.  
And I'm so happy so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart!

Vs. 3 I've got the wonderful love of my precious redeemer way down in the depths of my heart,  
Where? Down in the depths of my heart,  
Where? Down in the depths of my heart.  
I've got the wonderful love of my precious redeemer way down in the depths of my heart;  
down in the depths of my heart to stay!

Chorus: And I'm so happy. So very happy!  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.  
And I'm so happy so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart!

**Q. How is God's joy expressed? A. Through Jesus, others and you.**

***Song: Jesus and Others and You..... what a wonderful way to spell JOY.***

Jesus and Others and You  
What a wonderful way to spell JOY  
Jesus and Others and You  
In the life of each girl and each boy.

J is for Jesus for He has first place,  
O is for Others we meet face to face,  
Y is for You and whatever you do.  
That spells Joy, Joy, Joy.

**Now.... With that being said, or should I say sung.... Take note...**

**Gal 5: 22-23**

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

**Would you agree that there are many killjoys in life?**

In a world where we have the war in Iraq, the unrest in the Middle East, the shootings in Cincinnati, the threat of terror at any time and more; the world is in desperate need of massive doses of joy.

**It's always amazing to me to travel around the world and see the joy of the Christians who are truly poor.**

They are poor in the world's standards of riches, but they are extremely rich in the standards of the Kingdom! They know how to walk in joy even though they have nothing. I've experienced that this last week while in the Philippine Islands. To see the people in the jungle, with nothing, a hut to live in, having to walk wherever they go...they still have the joy of the Lord upon them! OH that we would all be that way!

You need joy in your life. It is not just some casual thing that it would be nice to have. You have a fundamental emotional need for joy in your life. Life without joy is overwhelming. Life without joy is overburdened. Life without joy is oppressive. Studies have actually shown that the more joy we have in our lives, the more productive we are.

**Illus:** US NEWS and WORLD REPORT article

There is an article in *US News and World Report* saying that corporations are now hiring Joy Consultants to kind of pop up and build up the joy in peoples' lives so that all the employees can be more productive. It is true that you have more energy, more creativity, more productivity the more joy you have in your life.

**The Book of Philippians**

When you talk about joy, you have to go to the book of Philippians, a little, short book in the New Testament – only four chapters long.

**16 times in four chapters**, Paul says "*Rejoice... Be joyful ... enjoy life.*" Sixteen times he uses the word "joy" in four chapters.

**The amazing thing is Paul didn't write this book when he was on vacation in the Caribbean.**

He was in prison, in a dungeon, in Rome waiting to be executed. In the darkest days of his life he writes the most positive book in the Bible. He gives us his six joy-builders. They are the opposite of the joy-busters in life. They are the antidotes to the killjoys of life.

## **7 Places True Joy Comes From**

### **#1 - Joy comes through salvation**

#### **Isaiah 12:2-3 (NIV)**

<sup>2</sup> Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation."

<sup>3</sup> With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

### **#2 - Joy comes at the return of Christ**

#### **Isaiah 35:10 (NIV)**

<sup>10</sup> and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

### **#3 - Joy comes through Christ words**

#### **John 17:13 (NIV)**

<sup>13</sup> "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

### **#4 - Joy comes in the presence of God**

#### **Psalms 16:11 (NIV)**

<sup>11</sup> You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

### **#5 - Joy comes in time**

#### **Psalms 30:5 (NIV)**

<sup>5</sup> For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

## #6 – Joy comes after sorrow

### **Psalms 126:5-6 (NIV)**

<sup>5</sup> Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.

<sup>6</sup> He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.

### **Psalms 30:11 (NIV)**

<sup>11</sup> You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,

### **Isaiah 61:3 (NIV)**

<sup>3</sup> and provide for those who grieve in Zion-- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

## #7 - Joy comes through asking

### **John 16:24 (NIV)**

<sup>24</sup> Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

Joy.... Is a choice. It's a choice we make daily. If we're dependent upon the events of the day to bring us joy – forget about. But.... If we're dependent upon the True source of all joy, falling more in love with Him daily, knowing that through Him and only Him comes joy – Jesus Christ.... Then we can make that decision to walk in His joy.

It's time to choose a life of joy.

I encourage you to. And as you do...

You watch... you wait... you'll see!

*Extra Notes About God's Joy*

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**It is God's will for us to have joy.**

**John 15:10-11 (NIV)**

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

**Christ was filled with Joy**

**Luke 10:21 (NIV)**

<sup>21</sup> At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

**In order to have strength, we must have joy.**

**Neh 8:10 (NIV)**

<sup>10</sup> Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

**How often should we have joy? ALWAYS**

**Phil 4:4 (NIV)**

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

**How powerful is joy?...**

**It was Joy that sustained Christ on the cross.**

**Heb 12:2 (NIV)**

<sup>2</sup> Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.