

“JOY” - KEEPING OUR EYES ON CHRIST!

- **Joy** is a state of mind and an orientation of the heart. (To be Glad!)

It is a settled state of **contentment, confidence, faith** and **hope**.

It is something or someone that provides a **source of happiness**.

- **Christians should always find reasons to be joyful.**

Philippians 4:4 (KJV) = KEEP OUR EYES ON CHRIST!

4 **Rejoice** in the Lord always: and again I say, **Rejoice**.

- It seems strange that a man **in** Prison would be telling the church to **Rejoice**
- But Paul’s **attitude** teaches us a very important Lesson:
- Our **inner attitudes** **DO NOT** have to reflect our **outward circumstances!**
- Paul was **full of joy** because he knew that no matter what happened to him:
- **JESUS CHRIST WAS WITH HIM!**
- **Ultimate JOY** comes from **Christ dwelling within US!**

- **A BETTER VERSION OF WHAT PAUL WAS SAYING IS: Rejoice** stupid...how many times do I have to tell you.....**REJOICE!!!!!!**

- Paul urged the Philippians to be **joyful** – they probably **needed encouraged**
- It is **easy to get discouraged** about unpleasant circumstances **or to take unimportant events to seriously!**
- **If you haven’t been joyful lately**
- **You may not** be looking at life from the right perspective!

- A **“JOY SUCKER”** is a person who **drains you of all your joy.**

They are the type of people that make you say,

“Is this what ministry is all about?”

- They will talk about how you dress
- They will talk about how bad you look

- They will talk about how your kids are the worst
- They will talk about how the Lord only talks to them
- They will talk about how disappointed they are with the church
- They will talk about how you didn't call them back when they thought you should have
- They are the ones that **burst your bubble**, even when you are having a good day
- **"Joy suckers"** These are people, things in your life, emotions, whatever it may be, **that suck the joy right out of you.**
- **They leave you empty.**
- **THESE PEOPLE ARE JOY SUCKERS!!!!!!!!!!!!!! REJOICE ALWAYS!!!!**

➤ Joseph was a dreamer....

- He had a dream
- His brothers became jealous
- They plotted to kill him
- **WHY? Because he had a dream**
- They were **"JOY SUCKERS!"**

Genesis 37:19-20 (NIV)

19 "Here comes that dreamer!" they said to each other.

20 "Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns (**or pit**) and say that a ferocious (**or wild**) animal devoured him. Then we'll see what comes of his dreams."

- **The only thing they could accuse him of was having a dream**
- **Often times in the ministry....people get jealous because you have a dream**
- **Often times in marriages...people get jealous because you have a dream**
- **Often times people get jealous when you push your kids...because you have a dream**

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.

C. S. Lewis

(THE ENEMY IS ALWAYS LOOKING TO KILL YOU AND OR YOUR DREAMS)

➤ **FACTS:**

- **1000 Pastors a day drop out of seminary because...Someone put a damper on their dream**
- **50% of the ministers starting out will not last 5 years.**
- **4,000 new churches begin each year and 7,000 churches close.**
- **Over 1,700 pastors left the ministry every month last year.**
- **Over 1,300 pastors were terminated by the local church each month, many without cause.**
- **Over 3,500 people a day left the church last year.**

Isaiah 61:3

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.

THERE ARE SOME NEGATIVE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE YOU HAVE TO LET GO OF TODAY!!!!!!

- God meets us in our brokenness
 - God continues to heal us in our brokenness
 - God will deliver us from our brokenness!
- **MOSES SENDS SPIES OUT TO THE LAND OF CANAAN: (the promised Land)**

Numbers 13:17-24 (KJV)

¹⁷ And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain:

18 And see the land, what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many;

19 And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds;

20 And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.

(Moses decided **what info was needed**, He took **careful steps to get the info!**)

21 So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath.

22 And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

23 And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.

24 The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

The grapes were to show how **goodly** the land was, which **the Lord had promised** for their inheritance!

- God has promised us some goodly stuff
- Take careful steps to obtain it!

➤ **NEGATIVE REPORTS COME BACK FROM 10 OF THE 12 SPIES**

Numbers 13:25-33 (KJV)

25 And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.

Report on the Exploration (NIV) = (To Moses)

²⁶ They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land.

²⁷ **They gave Moses this account:**

- **“We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit.** ²⁸ **But** the people who live there are **powerful**, and the cities are **fortified** and **very large**. We even saw descendants of Anak there. (A race of abnormally large people – Goliath)

²⁹ The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.”

- The spies give a good report, BUT, **could not quit focusing on their FEAR!**
- **Don’t let the negatives cause you to lose sight of the positives**

- ³⁰ **Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said,** “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.”

- ³¹ **But the men who had gone up with him said,** “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” ³² And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. ³³ We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.”

- **WHO ARE THE ONLY TWO THAT GOT TO GO INTO THE PROMISED LAND?**
- **JOSHUA & CALEB**

WHY? BECAUSE THEY WERE THE ONLY TWO THAT WERE POSITIVE AND KEPT THEIR JOY...

THE OTHER 10 CAME BACK CRYING WITH NEGATIVE REPORTS.

- JOSHUA AND CALEB CAME BACK WITH **GOOD REPORTS**

- Don't allow potential difficulties blind you to **God's power to help** and **promise to guide**.
- Caleb was willing to take an **unpopular** stand
- **To be effective** when you go against the crowd you must
- **Have the facts, Have the right attitude, State clearly what you believe!**

CLOSE:

1 Peter 2:1 (CEV) - A Living Stone and a Holy Nation

2 Stop being hateful! Quit trying to fool people, and start being sincere.

Don't be jealous or say cruel things about others.

- WHO WERE THE OUTER 10?
- **NO ONE REMEMBERS THEM...AND WE SHOULDN'T**
- **REMEMBER THE GOOD THINGS NOT THE BAD**

Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

You will either be known for the problems you solve or the problems you have created...

Which would you rather be known by?

“JOY” - KEEPING OUR EYES ON CHRIST!

Illustration: Have a vacuum with hose on the platform. Have several pieces of paper that says joy on the stage and in a bucket. The bucket should be titled JOY.

Have your JOY poured out and let the vacuum represent the JOY SUCKER IN YOUR LIFE. Suck up all the joy on the platform and out of the bucket.

Give everyone a sucker when they come in! Have “JOY” written on each one.