



# CONNECT GROUP NOTES

## Sunday 04.02.2024

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“Complete Joy”

### **Preacher**

Ps. Nathan Bean

### **Scripture**

“7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”

“19 Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, “Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me’? 20 Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. 21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. 22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. 23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”

John 15:7-11, John 16:19-24



## **Thought**

What is true joy? We know it has to be more than temporary happiness, or pretending that all is ok. True, lasting joy needs to be something far deeper, something that holds us through every season of life.

It's not denying hard times, it's not faking it, rather it's unearthing a richness of joy that sometimes can only be fully discovered through the depths of difficulty, in Christ our rock.

Jesus, in His final moments before He was taken away to be killed, used that very moment to speak to the disciples on Joy. The joy of Jesus is designed to hold us through every single season. It's not the icing on the cake of a trouble-free life, rather it's the bedrock of our faith in the midst of whatever life brings. We don't deny difficulty. Rather, Christian joy is something that holds us together in the midst of difficult circumstances. His joy is so powerful, so potent that it can and will hold us in the hardest of seasons.

True joy doesn't mean that life's pain is removed or forgotten, rather the scars are superseded by the joy found in Christ. It's a joy that can only come from him. No other joy can persist. Whether wealth or success or popularity or achievement, none can withstand a sudden change of season, a loss of stable circumstances. Life brings pain, it brings sadness, it brings difficulty, but in the midst of the pain there can be joy.

Christ's joy is one that persists regardless of season and circumstance. It is connected entirely to His presence and nearness. It's a joy that comes from the good shepherd who walks with us through the darkest valleys, who never leaves us, who never forsakes us, and who offers us a joy invincible which this world can never take away. It is not the path itself that leads to joy, but rather the presence of the person who walks with us.

Today, do not look to that which surrounds us, rather look into His face, the face of a loving Father who knows our pain, who has walked the dusty road of difficulty before us, and who will lovingly lead us by the hand through all that is, and is to come, from now until eternity, where His joy will be in us, and our joy will be complete.



## **Discussion Points**

1. Why do you think happiness so easily 'leaks' out of us?
2. What does "complete joy" mean, and how does this apply to each season of life (even hard ones)?
3. How do we find this complete joy? What does this practically look like?

## **Personal application + Prayer**

King Jesus,

You are the source of all joy, of all life, of all fullness, yet, You know what it is to feel emptiness, pain, betrayal and hopelessness. Today, I look to You. I turn my eyes away from the difficulty and complexity of life in order to look into Your face, the face of a loving saviour, of the only One who can truly give everlasting joy. Grant me your joy, Lord. Grant me the hope that is only found by walking life's twists and turns with You.

Amen.