

# Joy for the Journey (4): Christ Our Example

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(Philippians 2:5-10)

## I. Introduction

A. **Question:** Do you think Jesus was a basically happy and joyful person?

1. Was Jesus fun to be around? Or was he usually pretty serious and somber?
  - a. Isaiah indicates that Messiah would be familiar with sadness (**Isa 53:3**)  
<sup>3</sup> *He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.*
  - b. Jesus was a serious man on a serious mission—surely he wasn't happy
2. How is Jesus usually represented in art? (*Besides blonde hair and blue eyes*)
  - a. Paintings show Jesus as pretty serious (one on right is titled “Smiling Jesus”)
  - b. Movies also generally portray Jesus as pretty intense and serious
  - c. Do you think Jesus ever joked around with the apostles. Did he laugh?
    - 1) Matthew Video: Jesus playfully jokes with Matthew in **Matt 18:17**  
*if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or tax collector*
    - 2) Did Jesus smile at the image of a 2x4 in someone's eye (**Matt 7:3**)
3. Does it somehow seem sacrilegious to picture Jesus having belly laugh.

B. Jesus of the Gospels was not serious and somber; he was also a man of joy

1. Jesus was on one occasion overcome by joy and worship (**Luke 10:21**)  
<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.*
  - a. Should we be worried that Jesus seems to go all Pentecostal on us here?
    - 1) There is a textual variant here— “*overcome with joy in His spirit*”
    - 2) But His spirit is the Holy Spirit—Jesus is moved by joy to worship
  - b. **Context:** Apostles come back all hyped because they cast out demons
    - 1) Jesus tells them to rejoice because their names are written in heaven
    - 2) That moves him to overcome with joy, and break out in praise!
  - c. I remember reading about the normally dignified Alexander Campbell
    - 1) He was moved by Scott's preaching and stood and shouted “Glory!”
    - 2) Is what Jesus does here in the presence of apostles all that different?
  - d. Is it a stretch to suggest that Jesus was at times moved by great joy?

2. Jesus' enemies dismissed him as something of a party guy (**Matt 11:18-19**)  
*For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."'*
    - a. John didn't go to feasts (*ate bugs*), but Jesus went to all kinds of parties
      - 1) We went to banquets as the guest of Pharisees and of Tax Collectors
      - 2) His first miracle (*changing water to wine*) was done at wedding party
      - 3) In **Luke 14**, Jesus told 3 parables about parties... while at a party!
    - b. **Question:** Why do you think Jesus would get invited to all those parties?
      - 1) He was a popular guy, and parties were interesting with him there
      - 2) Jesus appeared comfortable with a good time... used setting to teach
  3. I'm not suggested that Jesus was fun-loving, joke-telling, wild-n-crazy guy
    - a. I don't think we need a Bible video with Robin Williams playing Jesus
    - b. But Jesus talked too much about joy not to have been a man that exuded it
      - 1) There was very little about his life circumstance that was "happy"
      - 2) Jesus lived in God's joy, and He passed joy on to us (**John 15:11**)  
*I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.*
- C. Our songs this morning all stressed the idea of following Jesus as our example
1. Jesus is always the perfect example in how we are to live as His disciples
    - a. Old Jewish saying, "*May you be covered in the dust of your rabbi*"
      - 1) Students followed their teacher as they walked from place to place
      - 2) If you follow the Master closely enough, you get covered by his dust
    - b. Part of the dust of Jesus that is to over us is to live in His basic joy
    - c. If we really walk like Jesus, we will come to know His joy (**John 17:13**)  
<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.*"
  2. But the joy we see in the life of Jesus isn't one of circumstance or situation
    - a. We suggested earlier that most judge happiness as what is happening now
      - 1) We're happy if what is happening is good; if it's not, we change it
      - 2) Much of our pursuit of happiness is desire to change circumstances
    - b. The circumstances of Jesus life were seldom happy in themselves
    - c. He lived in a joy that came from His farther... and defied circumstance
  3. To have the full joy Jesus that wants for us, we must follow His example

## II. Jesus: Our Example of Joy

### A. First, Jesus emptied Himself of Himself—he humbled Himself (**Phil 2:6-8**)

<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

1. Paul says that Jesus pre-existed in the very form or nature of God himself
  - a. The word used here is **μορφή**, from where we get the word “*morphe*”
    - 1) Exact word used of Jesus following the resurrection (**Mark 16:12**)  
*Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country.*
    - 2) A form of the same word is used of the transfiguration (**Matt 17:2**)  
*There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light.*
  - b. The “**form**” or “**nature**” of Jesus’ existence was precisely that of God
  - c. Hebrews says Jesus is of the very “*essence*” or “*substance*” of God (**1:3**)  
*And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature*
2. Jesus did not see this equality with God “*something to be grasped*” (**v. 6**)
  - a. The word literally is “*plunder*,” something taken or held by force
  - b. Jesus rather gave up his place—notice the emphasis on humility here
    - 1) Jesus “*made himself nothing*” or more literally “*he emptied himself*”
    - 2) Jesus took the nature or form (**μορφή** again) of a “*servant*” or “*slave*”
    - 3) Jesus “*humbled himself and became obedient to death*” on cross
  - c. Mac Davis sang, “*It’s hard to humble when you’re perfect in every way*”
  - d. Jesus was literally “*perfect in every way*” and yet he humbled Himself
3. If we are to follow Jesus, then we we’re going to have to get over ourselves
  - a. So often, our joy is lost in our rush to make sure we’re not disrespected
    - 1) We’re cut us off in traffic and go crazy! *Why?* They did it to ME!
    - 2) Cashier is slow and we get so annoyed! *Why?* Wasting MY time!
    - 3) Server brings us wrong item for 3<sup>rd</sup> time and get so irritated! *Why?*
  - b. Do you think just maybe we’d be happier if we go over ourselves?
4. We can’t accept Jesus’ invitation to follow without humility (**Mt 11:28-29**)

<sup>28</sup> “*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*” <sup>29</sup> *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

  - a. Jesus identifies himself as “*gentle and humble.*” *And if we follow Him...*
  - b. We will never know the joy God wants for us until we get over ourselves

**B. Second**, Jesus dedicated Himself to doing the God's will totally and completely

1. To hear Jesus tell it, he could do nothing except God's will (**John 5:19**)  
*I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.*
  - a. Jesus was so dedicated to God's that his work imitates that of the Father
    - 1) **Question** (Wed): *Did Jesus decide to go to cross or did God tell him?*
    - 2) **Answer**: Ultimately the will of the Father IS the will of the Son!
  - b. Jesus was so focused on God, that God was what He was about (**Jn 5:30**)  
<sup>30</sup>*By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.*
  - c. **Jesus**: *"My food is to do the will of him who sent me and finish his work"* (**4:34**)
2. What does this mean for us? Jesus was a man on a mission, we get that.
  - a. Our food must be more than God's work, right? We have job, family, etc.
  - b. That's just it! We must see our job, our family, our life as God's work!
  - c. We need to concentrate every part of life so that it belongs to God!
3. Take our jobs (*please!*). What does Paul say to working stiff's in **Eph 6:5**?  
<sup>5</sup>*Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ.*
  - a. Slaves were to serve their earthy masters just as they were serving Jesus
    - 1) Maybe we need to remember that slaves didn't have the best of jobs
    - 2) And yet they were expected to do their work as if they served God
  - b. Slaves were to see their work-like-a-dog job as doing God's work (**6:6**)  
<sup>6</sup>*Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.*
  - c. Like Jesus, they were to be totally dedicated to Go's work while at work
  - d. Now, I'm sure your job is a lot tougher than a first century salt mine...
4. We tend to compartmentalize our lives—work, family, friends, leisure, etc.
  - a. And it's easy for all these different parts of life to vie for superiority
    - 1) In fact, what really happens is self wants superiority in all of these
    - 2) We want our way in all these parts—at work, in our family, at church
  - b. But what if we truly dedicate every part of our life to serving God?
  - c. What if we could really see ever part of life as opportunity to serve God
  - d. Maybe then we could understand what it means to be Jesus' disciple

### III. Conclusion

- A. Remember when Saul became king of Israel— complications at coronation
  - 1. The complication was that Saul was hiding among the baggage
    - a. He was from the smallest family, smallest clan and smallest tribe
    - b. How could such a humble possibly become the king of Israel?
  - 2. Unfortunately, Saul lost the humility that made him a good king
    - a. Pride led to rebellion—offered sacrifices and kept plunder of Amalekites
    - b. As part of Samuel condemnation of Saul, he said this (**1 Samuel 15:17**)  
*Samuel said, “Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel.*
    - c. As long as Saul was small in his own eyes, then he kept his eyes on God
- B. That’s the struggle we have find “*Joy on the Journey.*” He keep eyes on SELF
  - 1. We want what we want—and think happiness will come when we get it
  - 2. The example of Jesus points us to a joy that comes in a whole new way
    - a. First, we humble ourselves before God... just as Jesus did
    - b. Second, we commit ourselves to the will of God... just as Jesus did
  - 3. Will you follow the example of Jesus and find his “*Joy on the Journey*”