

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS AND IRREVOCABLE JOY

Easter Sunday, March 31st, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Pastor Don Horban, Cedarview Community Church, Newmarket, ON

IPAD TEXT - John 16:20-22 - “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. [21] When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. [22] So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.”

“No one will take your joy from you.” Do you see those words at the end of verse 22? They are not the words of Joel Osteen. They are the words of Jesus Christ. Through His resurrection from the dead He was going to bestow **irrevocable** joy - the kind of joy that couldn't be eclipsed by anyone else or anything else - on His disciples.

I can't help but think our world is short on irrevocable joy. We live in a world filled with **pleasure**. And I suppose there are many short-sighted people who confuse **fleeting pleasure** with **irrevocable joy**, but that is a terrible and deadly blunder. There are pleasures of wealth and pleasures of health and pleasures of body and mind. But all of these only last while the supply of wealth is secure, the body is strong, and the mind is alert. Even the coming of Covid sucked the joy from millions of hearts.

So when we hear these words from Jesus they almost seem too good to be true - like a warrantee that looks good on the box, but you know will never turn out to be as good as it reads. ***“No one will take your joy from you!”*** How can such a massive claim be true? Is there good reason to cling to it? How can this possibly work in the real world? This is the subject of our teaching this morning.

As far as the ***“real world”*** goes, Jesus uttered these words one night before He was going to be executed. He was trying to brace, not Himself, but His disciples, for what they were going to go through. That’s why He speaks the words of **verse 16 - “A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.” - IPAD TEXT**

The disciples are confused by these words and they discuss what Jesus might have meant in **verses 17-18**. Jesus sees they are confused and tries again to explain in **verse 20 - “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.” - IPAD TEXT**

He means that He is going to be taken from them when He is killed and they will mourn and lament. Then He will rise from the dead and they will be filled with great joy, joy that will be **irrevocable (22)**. In other words, the joy they have **right now** with Jesus physically present, **isn't** irrevocable. We know this because Jesus Himself tells them they are going to lose this joy when He is killed. But there is a specific **kind** of joy that will only be possible **after** His resurrection from the dead. They will experience this **irrevocable** joy **after** they see Jesus again, **after** His resurrection.

To make His meaning more clear, Jesus uses the illustration of the birth of a child in **verse 21 - "When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world." - IPAD TEXT**

There is a world of difference between the way a woman feels on the delivery table and the way she feels in the maternity ward with her new baby by her side. This is the best picture Jesus can come up with to tell His disciples the change of heart they are going to experience as they go through the agony and darkness and loss of Jesus' presence as He is taken from them and killed on the cross, and the joy they will experience when they see Him again after His resurrection. But, just like the birth of a child (especially in Jesus' day), there is no way to get to the joy of the presence of the baby without the agonizing process of travail and labor.

But, and this is the important point, once Jesus has risen from the dead, His disciples will be indwelt, not only by **greater** joy in measure - like a quart of joy is more than a pint - but a different **kind** of joy altogether - joy of a different **order** and **nature**.

And then Jesus tells them how this joy will be different. Earthly joys **fade**. All of them. Resurrection joy **lasts**. Jesus says it **“cannot be taken from you.”**

All of this leads up to the key question that must be dealt with as Jesus makes His landmark statement in **verse 22 - "So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you." - IPAD TEXT**

All other joys will fade. This joy will not. And the obvious question is **“Why not?”** What is so special, so extraordinary about **this** joy - resurrection joy - that Jesus can make such an unconditional guarantee? I think there are **two answers** from the New Testament:

- 1) **“NO ONE CAN TAKE THIS JOY FROM YOU”... BECAUSE YOUR JOY COMES FROM BEING WITH JESUS, AND JESUS, BEING RISEN AND ALIVE FOR EVERMORE, WILL NEVER BE CUT OFF FROM YOU AGAIN**

Jesus makes very clear the **source** of the disciples' future joy - "***I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice***"(22). In other words, their joy comes from being with Jesus. This text offers no hope for secure joy for people who do not enjoy being with Jesus Christ. If Jesus says to your heart this morning, "***I will see you again,***" and your heart does not respond to that with rejoicing, then this text is not a **promise** to you. It is an **invitation**. You need to come and discover that knowing Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is the greatest source of joy and meaning that can be had.

Remember, if your ultimate joy in this life **isn't** knowing Jesus Christ, even if you are a very religious, church going person, then you have no **secure** joy in this world. I would urge everyone this morning to seriously and honestly examine the ultimate source of your joy. Is your ultimate source of joy your wealth? Is it your success? Is it the bottom line of your business that spins the wheels of joy and purpose and meaning? Is it sports or travel or leisure? Is it your friends? Is it your house and your cottage? Is it sexual fulfillment?

Jesus wants to address any flimsy foundation of joy this morning. All of these things can be taken from us so quickly. One bad report from a doctor will knock the legs out from under any false foundation of joy. One recession can set you on your back financially. Loved ones get sick and die.

And if just **hearing** about this is depressing, it only shows how dependant we are on these things for our joy. Jesus says our joy must be rooted in Him and His presence in our lives. Only knowing the Risen Jesus can bring **irrevocable** joy. Why? Because He has now been raised from the dead and will never be cut off from His people again. He is not going to be crucified ever again. He is not on the cross. He has defeated death forever.

So when Jesus says He is the source of **irrevocable** joy, He is saying, ***“I am your joy. And I will never die again. So the source of your joy is unending and eternal.”***

But there is another issue that we must consider. There is a second reason Jesus can give **irrevocable** joy:

- 2) **“NO ONE CAN TAKE THIS JOY FROM YOU”.... BECAUSE YOUR JOY COMES FROM BEING WITH JESUS, AND THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS MEANS THAT YOU WILL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, AND YOU WILL NEVER BE CUT OFF FROM HIM**

These two truths are **similar**, but not exactly the **same**. First, Jesus will never be cut off from you. Second, you will live forever and never be cut off from Him.

You see, **two** things have to be true if we are to have eternal joy in Jesus Christ. First, the **source** of our joy must last forever. That's Jesus Christ, God the Son. He has conquered death and is now alive forevermore. But, second, **we** must last forever. If either our **source** of joy or we **ourselves** - if either one doesn't last forever - then our joy will be taken from us. If our joy is to be irrevocable then both our **source** of joy and our **experience** of joy must be eternal.

O how we settle for temporary joy! You've all heard the saying, "**Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.**" Food doesn't last forever, and fun doesn't last forever, because **I** don't last forever. Joy is fleeting and insecure. Grab as much as you can and make the most of it that you can. We only have a brief, fleeting shot at joy.

What a tragic way to view life, and what a tragic way to have joy! If you are tempted to think that way this morning, let me lift your sights with these magnificent words of Jesus: "**No one will take your joy from you!**" First, because Jesus will never die again. And second, because, through faith in Jesus Christ, you can have eternal life.

Look at the way Jesus repeated this great truth on another occasion:

IPAD TEXT - John 14:18-19 - "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. [19] Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. "

"Because I live, you will live also." Not only will Jesus live forever as the **source** of our joy, but **we** will live forever through faith in Him to **experience** this joy forever.

You and I can't even imagine anything that we can keep forever. We cannot easily get our minds around anything that will not be taken from us. Our possessions. Our family. The breath in our lungs. The sight in our eyes. The beating of our own heart. Nothing is really **ours** as a possession for long.

Then Jesus comes. He passes through the dark night of the cross for your sins and mine. His disciples mourn and are confused. They experience that anguish of the labor before the birth. But Jesus comes back to them again, alive forevermore - ***"I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you."***

History has borne it out. We have the words of these same disciples long after Jesus had ascended into heaven. They faced great hardship, pain, loss, and even death. What about their joy? Did the promise of Jesus ring true for them in the real world?

You be the judge:

IPAD TEXT - Romans 8:35-39 - "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? [36] As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." [37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. [38] For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

So it is something very precious that I am describing this morning. Find satisfaction and forgiveness and eternal life in Jesus Christ. There is nothing else like it in this world. It is not available through anyone else but the Risen Christ Jesus of Easter. I commend Jesus to you this morning. I commend eternal, irrevocable joy in His gracious, loving presence.