

JOY IN HEAVEN

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Luke 15:8-10

1. As followers of Jesus Christ we should deliberately live a life that is focused on impacting the lives of others.
2. Jesus commanded us to go and make disciples and the question we need to ask ourselves is, "What am I deliberately doing to obey that command?"
3. How we live before and impact the lives of others should be of utmost concern to any serious follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. The passage we are looking at today focuses on one of three parables Jesus told in response to the accusation leveled at Him by the Pharisees and scribes that, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

NOTE: Jesus modeled what my life and your life should look like. Acts 10:38-39

"You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and **how He went about doing good** and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."

5. All three parables make the point that when someone or something of value is lost and then found it is grounds for rejoicing.
6. The parable we just read states, "In the same way, I tell you, there is joy **in the presence of the angels of God** over one sinner that repents."
7. Have you ever considered that what you and I do on earth impacts what is being manifested in heaven? See Luke 15:7
8. When a sinner repents God manifests His joy before the angels of heaven.
9. I want to explore this idea with you with the hope that it will strongly motivate us to cooperate with Jesus in the business of seeking and saving the lost.

I. Motivation plays an important part in any endeavor.

- A. All of us know people who we want to see saved.
- B. The question is why?
- C. Most people's motivation is selfish and self-serving in that we do not want to see someone we know and care about lost for all eternity.
- D. I think we ought to be motivated by some other things.
 1. We should want to see Jesus' sacrifice and suffering accomplishing its purpose.
 2. Because we know and love God we should want others to know and love God.
 3. Since we have repented towards God of our sinful rebellion against Him and His Christ and our part in the Crucifixion we should want others to do the same.
- E. The Apostle Paul was motivated by the love of Christ and a desire to be pleasing to God.
 1. 2 Cor 5:9-10
Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.
 2. 2 Cor 5:14-15
For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

F. Nothing pleases God more than seeing the anguish Jesus went through on the Cross accomplishing its purpose on the earth. Isa 53:10-11

“But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. 11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities.”

II. Mankind moves God to manifest His character and attributes including His love and His wrath.

A. The Bible declares that God is love. 1 John 4:8

“The one who does not love does not know God, for **God is love.**”

1. The statement, “God is love,” is true and it has always been true and will always be true.

2. Yet, it was man’s sinful rebellion against God that moved Him to manifest His love in an observable way.

a. John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

b. Romans 5:8

“But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

B. The Psalmist asked, “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?” Psalm 139:7

1. He went on to answer his own question by pointing out that God is Omnipresent.

2. However, there is an important difference between God’s presence and His manifest presence.

3. God is present here today, but what we need is for Him to manifest His presence.

C. Like God’s love the wrath of God is a settled and ongoing reality, but it is the manifestation of that wrath that we need to be concerned about.

1. God’s wrath abides on all who have not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:36

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

2. The present and final manifestation of that wrath impacts all who live on this planet. Rom 1:18-19

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.”

III. Bringing men and women to Jesus causes God to manifest joy in the presence of the angels.

A. People are either pleasing to God or a grief to God.

B. We see this principle very early in the biblical narrative.

1. Gen 6:5-6

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

2. Gen 6:8-10

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. 9 These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.

NOTE: Those who repent towards God and believe the Gospel go from grieving God to pleasing God.

C. We please God when the life of His Son is manifested in and through us.

D. We please God when we live our lives for the same reason Jesus lived His life on earth.

NOTE: At Jesus' baptism a voice out of heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Matthew 3:17) Again, on the Mount of Transfiguration God declared, "This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!" (Matthew 17:5)

E. I cannot think of a greater joy than knowing that by the grace of God I have caused Him to manifest His joy and pleasure.

APPLICATION

1. The life we live and the words we speak reveal to others what really matters to us.

Matt 15:17-20

Jesus said to Peter, "Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated? 18 "But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. 19 "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. 20 "These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."

2. We will not be effective in impacting others if there is little or no evidence that God has impacted us.

3. We must be different if we are going to make a difference.

4. First and foremost we should desire to glorify God, advance His kingdom, and manifest His righteousness.

5. May God help us to do so that His joy and pleasure might be manifested in Glory and in our hearts as well.

"When I run I feel the pleasure of God." Eric Liddell