

Living Life in a Fallen World

Joy in a Pandemic – Ecclesiastes 5v18-6v12

Feel the Joy!

Sometimes it's hard to be joyful.

Have you ever lost anything - a possession or a person - that caused you to lose your joy?

The teacher tells us that the people we love and the possessions we hold dear are all *Breath*.

What does he mean when he says they are all *breath*?

The teacher also tells us that as we live in a fallen World there is an eternal j_____ that is both f_____ and s_____. A joy that will s_____ you and keep you through every struggle of life.

Experiencing Joy

Present Joy

Where does the teacher say we can find satisfaction? v18

The c_____ of the universe who owns all things and sustains all things has put your daily n_____ on the table! Enjoy what God has provided and given you today.

If we have been given a 'job' or we have 'money' how should we treat them? v19 & 8v15

Future Joy

Those who trust that God gives us life and all we have are not fearful of the future.

Instead '*God keeps them occupied with Gladness of heart.*' v20

The joy we can have today is a f_____ of the eternal joy to come.

All gifts from God are a pointer to something e_____ satisfying and fulfilling.

Present joys are s_____; Future joy is the s_____. Enjoying God's gifts today prepare us for God's joy to come. A joy that is eternally fulfilling and satisfying.

Losing Joy

Over desires

Contrast the person described in 5v19 and the person described in 6v2. [They both have wealth and possessions, but what is the difference?](#)

Why does the person in 6v2 have no joy? They have no joy from God, because they are focused on what *'their h_____ d_____.'*

Life, pleasure, wisdom, work and wealth are all good gifts from God. But when we make them our ultimate source of Joy we will become confused, disappointed and frustrated because they do not last.

Empty life

The person who seeks their joy and happiness in wealth and possessions have no rest.

[What are they concerned about?](#) Look back at chapter 5 verse 12, 14,15

Augustine was an influential Bishop in North Africa about the same time as Patrick came to be a missionary in Ireland. [Where did he look for joy?](#)

'My sin was that I sought not in God himself, but in the t_____ he had c_____...and in this way I collapsed into sufferings, embarrassments, and erring of ways.'

[Where did he find true joy?](#) *'For there is a joy that is not given to those who do not love you, but only to those who l_____ you for your own sake.'*

Joy is found in God and we lose that joy when we over desire his gifts.

If God is not our highest pursuit, our greatest desire – our life will be eternally empty.

Keeping Joy

Controlled desires

Verse 7 tells us we have an *'appetite that is never satisfied'*.

[What are some of the things you want that you think will give you joy?](#)

Augustine had a very close friend who died. His friend's death made him very depressed. This is what he learned: When we seek joy in things and people we are *'chained to things bound to die'*...and when we lose them *'we are torn to shreds.'* [Talk about what this means.](#)

Desire Christ

The things around us, our loved ones, our most treasured possessions are all shadows. They are not the substance. [How do we receive and experience eternal Joy?](#)

God's gift of Joy is seen at the death and resurrection of Jesus.

[What happens through his death and resurrection?](#)

Through his death he takes my judgement for loving the g_____ more than the g_____.

Through his resurrection he defeats death and gives us l_____ in all its f_____.

Christ comes to die for us so that we might know him.

Christ rises again for us so that we might never lose him.

To Think about: *Redirect your love toward God by loving him with your whole heart and loving him for himself, not just for what he can give you. Then, and only then, does the contentment start to come.*

In Christ is our Eternal Joy.