

I. ME

- A. Welcome/online
- B. Review-
 - 1. Xmas brings us peace with God and each other
 - a. B/c of Jesus we have peace
 - 2. Xmas brings us hope in this life and the next
 - a. B/c Jesus rose we have hope
 - 3. This week—Xmas brings us joy
- C. We all know Xmas is supposed to make you happy.
 - 1. Joy everywhere
- D. It's promised on the first xmas- **Luke 2:10-11**

II. WE

- A. Here's what I know about you (*I hate it when he does this*)...
 - 1. You want to be happy... but usually you're not as happy as you want to be.

2. We are all on a happiness quest.

- 3. Almost every decision we make is based on whether or not it makes us happy...
- 4. Entertainment industry/sports/toys...
- 5. Everyone is in debt b/c trying to buy happiness

- B. Unfortunately we often confuse pleasure (or the absence of pain) with happiness...
 - 1. We think that finding pleasure is what makes us happy...
 - a. If I could only buy/eat/drive/live in/sleep with that... THEN I'd be HAPPY
 - 2. We believe these things will make us happy even though we actually know this isn't true
 - a. Miserable millionaires.
 - b. Decisions you made to find pleasure hoping it would make you happy?
 - c. Addictions come from seeking pleasures to make you happy.
 - d. Religions... absence of pain

3. Live for pleasure and you'll never be happy

- C. A lot of people think God doesn't care about your happiness...
 - 1. He just cares if you follow the rules...
 - a. Might be one of the reasons you gave up on church...
 - 2. As long as you don't smoke, drink, or chew or go with girls that do... God is cool.
- D. TRUTH: God doesn't just want you to be happy- **God is committed to your happiness.**
 - 1. **John 10:10b**- Don't need the slide
 - 2. As C.S. Lewis put it... "Joy is the serious business of Heaven."

- E. So how do we experience the happiness/joy God wants us to have?
1. Is there a secret trick?
 2. Is true happiness and joy only available to the select few?
 3. It's actually a lot simpler than you might think...

F. **Christmas is proof that God loves you and wants you to be happy.**

1. The answer is in that baby the angels told the shepherds about.

III. **GOD**

- A. Jesus himself actually tells us the key in His last conversation with his disciples before He's arrested. (**John 15:9-13**)
- B. John Background/Passage Background
1. Just had last dinner/giving them instructions/telling them what's going to happen/ summing everything up... last words.

C. **V. 9-11**

1. Told them/us this so we can have complete joy???
 - a. Yeah but isn't he talking about commands???
 - b. Let's take a breath and look at it.

D. **V. 9**

1. **Joy is the result of God's love.**
2. Every good thing comes from God.
3. Everything that truly makes you happy is a gift from God.
4. We've all been designed to experience happiness and we've all been given a taste of what God's joy is...
 - a. Walking through the woods
 - b. Babies laugh
 - c. Smile or kind word from a loved one.
 - d. Penguins

5. Those joys are simply a **taste** of the complete joy found in Jesus
6. But this Complete Joy is the response to the love of God through Jesus.

E. Gospel

1. Peace with God/ Hope for eternity

F. You can never produce or manufacture your own joy

G. B/c it's the result of having God's Spirit living in you

1. It's a gift from Him... a fruit/result of the Spirit
2. Not the fruit of getting everything you can/want
3. Or hoarding everything you get
4. It's not the result of posting the best "happy" pictures
5. You don't make up this kind of joy it's a gift.

H. If you are IN Him... He has already given it to you... you just have to believe it and open it... by thanking Him for it and simply walking in it/living it.

I. So now everything will be great? NOPE.

1. Life sucks.
2. But the joy Jesus gives is deeper and wider than life's pain.
3. Jesus' complete joy is not the absence of pain... It's experiencing joy and happiness in the middle of pain... of looking at our pain square in the face and still choosing to be happy... or rejoice.

4. 2 Cor 4:7-9; 6:8-10, Phil 4:4

5. Joy is not the absence of pain.

6. Joy is having peace and hope even in the midst of pain.

7. Yes there is pain...
 - a. BUT... You can have choose joy in any situation...
 - b. B/c you know you aren't abandoned.
 - c. You know you aren't alone
 - d. You know you are understood and accepted and perfectly loved
 - e. You know who you are b/c you know whose you are.
 - f. And one day (in this life or in eternity) your pain will be over and your joy will be complete.
 - g. Jesus said, "You're going to have pain in this world... but take heart [be happy] I have overcome the world."

J. PEACE + HOPE = JOY

- K. "Remain in my love." Experience it fully...—How?

L. V. 10-11

1. Commands?
2. What are his commands?

M. V. 12

1. Love each other as I have loved you.
2. **You are happiest when you are free to love others.**
3. Not that complicated
4. When your life is centered on yourself and your pleasure... you're never happy. B/c you're never satisfied.
5. But when you know how much you are loved by God/ When you have His joy in you...
 - a. You don't have to worry about yourself...
 - b. And you are free to love others through the love and joy of Jesus living inside of you.
6. It starts with knowing the source... God's love for us through Jesus.

7. You start overflowing with His love, hope, peace and joy.

IV. YOU

- A. Are you happy?
 1. Or are you pursuing pleasure hoping someday it'll make you happy.
 2. Are you trying so desperately to avoid pain that you've forgotten how to be happy?
 3. Have you avoided Jesus b/c you're afraid he'll make you give up trying to be happy?
 4. Have you become bored or cynical in your faith b/c you've been worrying about making god happy instead of enjoying and sharing his gift of Joy?
 5. **You'll find the happiness and joy you've always longed for in Jesus.**
 6. It's a gift... but you have to open it by trusting Him... Trusting His love and sacrifice.
- B. God is committed for your happiness.
 1. So much so that he came to earth as a baby and died in order to bring you peace, hope, and joy.
 2. Being willing to die for something is being pretty committed.
- C. Experience his peace, hope, and joy no matter what situation you are in.
 1. Accept Jesus' love for you... Find peace and Hope
 2. Share that love with others... and experience complete joy.

V. WE

- A. Christmas is proof that God loves you and wants you to be happy.
- B. Accept His love and experience the Peace, Hope, and Joy that He brought us.
- C. What if... your Xmas was actually joyful?
- D. What if no matter what happens... whether family members try to fight or manipulate, the kids don't behave the way you want, or none of your plans turn out the way you'd hoped...
 - 1. You were able to choose to let the Joy of Jesus rule your heart.
 - 2. And you chose to be share that peace, hope, and joy with those around you?
- E. Christmas is for you so you can be for others.
- F. **Be Contagiously Joyful.**

G. Romans 15:13