

True Vine 5: Joy Completed

We've been looking at John 15:1-8

- God is the Gardener: tending, caring, feeding, pruning, all to get fruit.
- Jesus is the True Vine
 - All others are false and he is also the True branch, that shows us what it is to live the Spirit filled life. Isaiah 11:1,2 . **Connected. Empowered.**
- We are the Branches – that often feel unfruitful.
 - Risk but also reward
- Commanded to Love
 - Invitation to intimacy. Declaration of Identity. Foundation of our impact.

John 15⁹ "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

We all want joy. We have it. We lose it. We do whatever we can to find it again.

- The world offers us its 'joy'
 - Strive for pleasure, recognition, power and you will have joy.
 - Don't give, get! Don't serve, be served!
 - The world's joy comes and goes. It's doesn't last and doesn't complete.

Jesus tells us that we can have his joy. That it can be in us. That it can complete our joy.

- Think of what has got you down, left you unsatisfied, robbed you of your joy.
 - Was it something big? Something small?
 - Now imagine having your joy filled up. **Completed.** So that no matter what happened to you, big or small, your joy remained intact.

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Jesus has a definite logic of joy. He connects joy to obedience and love

- I have told you this...What? Love
 - Remain in my love. How?
 - Obey my commands. What?
 - I command you to love each other.

- We love each other, obeying the command of Jesus, and remain in his love.

This leads to his joy being in us.

- Which leads to our joy being complete.
 - This is not only euphoria. It's not only pleasure. It is satisfaction. Fulfilment. Contentment.

Jesus knows who we are. He knows what we are

- Jesus knows we were made for relationship.
 - He knows that sin (disobedience) breaks relationships. He knows that sin robs us of our joy.
 - Jesus in himself connects the two greatest relational dimensions we need.
 - Between us and God and between us and other humans.
 - By loving others who are part of his body I remain in Jesus
 - By not loving others who are part of his body I hurt myself. I cut myself from joy..
- For Jesus joy is the natural result from loving him and others.

Conclusion

The joy of Jesus in us completes us.

- It's simple. We are fully human, satisfied, content and joyful when we are connected to Jesus by loving his people.

The joy of Jesus in us motivates us.

- Luke 15. A sheep is lost, a coin is lost, a son is lost. But the shepherd risks, the woman works, the father waits and what is lost is found.
 - And then there is joy. Lack of joy shows something else motivates us.

The joy of Jesus in us sustains us.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

What this city needs from us is a people who have the joy of Jesus in them.

A joy that lasts, the overcomes circumstances, that is so deep it completes our humanity.

