

Finding and Keeping the Joy of the Lord

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon emphasizes the importance of understanding and maintaining the joy of the Lord through prayer, worship, and sharing God's love with others.

Duration: 53:21

Scripture: Ezra 8:6

Topics: "Joy"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells the story of the prodigal son from Luke chapter 15. The younger son decides to leave his father's house, thinking there is more to life than what he has experienced. He goes on a journey and eventually realizes that true joy and fulfillment can only be found in a relationship with God. When he returns to his father's house, he is welcomed with open arms and a celebration ensues. The preacher emphasizes the importance of turning away from sin and receiving Christ as Savior to experience the joy and blessings of a living relationship with God.

Transcript

Praise God. How many tonight have one of these cards with you? A prayer card, do you raise it up? Raise them up if you have them with you. Well, praise God.

Now, what we're doing here at Times Square Church is there's a a prayer card that you can get at the information table and it's an opportunity to go to people that are in your neighborhood or people you meet throughout the day and just say, I'm going to a prayer meeting on Tuesday night and I'd like to pray for you. And folks, you'd be, I was, today I went in to shoemakers and I walked up to the owner of the shop and I said, I'm going to a prayer meeting tonight and the Lord's put you on my heart to pray for you. Is there anything I can pray for? And this gentleman is known for his abruptness.

Let's put it that way. And he just melted. He said, for me? And I said, yes, and it's true.

I said, God put that on my heart to pray for you. And he said, what would you, and he started listing the things that, would you pray for my wife? She's not well. And would you pray for my family? And would you pray? And he would just, he just wouldn't stop talking to me.

It was just so, and folks, we're living at a time when people, they're living without hope for tomorrow. And you would be surprised if you and I would have the courage to just reach out and just say, I'm going to a

prayer meeting Tuesday night. Now you have to come to a prayer meeting Tuesday night or it's not true.

Okay. And give them a card and say, listen, would you, would you like to fill out on this? There's an opportunities. You can check a box or you can write in your name and what it is.

And I'm going to hold on to that. And I'm going to keep, I'm going to keep praying for this man. I'm going to go back and see him.

I'm going to visit him and tell him I'm still praying for you. How's that situation going with your family? And so what we do on Tuesday night is those who have a card for somebody to pray with, they raise it up. And those who don't just gather around them and they'll, they'll actually tell you who the person is and some information about their prayer request.

Then we joined together and we pray for actual people that people in this congregation have encountered. And we believe God to answer those prayers. I believe God that he's going to answer my prayer.

And so for those who have a card now, would you raise it up nice and high? Just like I'm doing those who have a card. Okay. Those who don't look around and find the nearest person around you that has a card raised up and form a circle.

And those who raise the cards up, tell the people around you, do it now. Tell the people around you who it is and then pray together and let's truly believe God. And as soon as you have done that, start to pray.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you. Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you. Jesus. Father, we thank you.

Thank you. Dear God. For hearing our cry.

Thank you. Jesus for stirring our hearts with faith. Oh God.

It's so good. it's so sweet to trust you it's so good it's a delight to our hearts to come before a God who listens who hears and who cares about our every need God you care about our neighbors you care about our co-workers you care about our family members who are lost dear God you care about them with the same love and compassion that you showed for us when you rescued us from the pits of hell and you brought us into an everlasting kingdom father we pray the same for our co-workers we pray the same for our neighbors God we stand like those lepers that cannot be content with with all the delights of the pleasures and the the benefits dear God of this gospel we were constrained dear God in our hearts to share with others dear God the goodness that we've tasted that we've seen in Christ

Jesus God so we pray for the same grace to meet them at the point of their need we pray for the same grace that met us and broke the chains and broke the prison doors for our lives we pray that for the same grace the saving grace the delivering grace the healing grace the restoring grace the same grace to meet our neighbors the same grace to meet our co-workers the same grace to meet our family members God we thank you we pray that every prayer request each and every one those for healing those for finances those for troubled marriages those for troubled children God we pray for each and every one of them to turn them around for a praise report to the glory and honor of your name that father they would be astounded at how fast you answer prayer and how awesome you are God that there would

be praise reports they would come to us saying I don't understand it but God has come through God make a testimony for your name to the glory and honor of your name and for the saving of their souls God save each and every one of these if they don't know you bring back the back slider dear God bring back dear God the wayward children bring them back bring back husbands that have left their wives dear God bring them back restore families restore homes dear God and glorify your name we believe you God you are a God who cannot fail you are a God who never fails you are a God who knows what they need Jesus better than they know themselves God we thank you for this in Jesus name we pray I want to talk tonight for a few moments about how do I keep the joy of the Lord number one what is the joy

of the Lord and how do I keep it now you and I are experiencing somewhat of the joy of the Lord tonight we come in we clapped our hands yeah I've seen a lot of you jump up and down I gathered most of you weren't doing that throughout the day today your boss might have been jumping up and down screaming at you but you weren't jumping up and down and you come into the house of the Lord and say well what is the joy of the Lord and because the Bible says the joy of the Lord is my strength and so how do I understand the joy of the Lord and how does it give me strength and how can I keep the joy of the Lord this was a question in my heart it used to annoy me when I would be in a bad mood when I was a young Christian and people would say oh cheer up the joy of the Lord is your strength well

there has to be a reason for that there's got to be a foundation that that's built on other than me just trying to smile and look like I'm happy if it's not been that kind of a day in my life I want you to turn with me to the book of Nehemiah please if you find Psalms and go back three books you'll find Nehemiah and chapter 8 and I want to go look at the origin of the verse the joy of the Lord is your strength now while you're finding that I'd like to pray father I thank you tonight for the anointing of your Holy Spirit I thank you Lord that you are able to make this word sing inside of us you're able to make it live you're able to make your word burn you're able to give us understanding and us out of every trap and pit and wrong impression even of God that we might find ourselves in I

asked tonight Lord did you just use me as a vessel Lord to build this foundation of understanding what the joy of the Lord is for you yourself Lord said in the book of Psalms that we're to sing praises with understanding and so help us to understand help me to explain this and God help us to lay hold of it and I ask it in Jesus name now Nehemiah the whole book is about a people coming back to rebuild what they had lost the people of the nation of Israel had an incredible promise that they would be blessed and be the children of blessing in the earth and as they we do as they did at that season they dealt casually with the things of God the promises that were given them the life that they were promised they dealt casually with it and they began to walk outside of the borders of what God

said their experience with him should be and subsequently were taken into 70 years of captivity into a foreign nation and at the end of that 70 years according to the Word of God that he gave to Jeremiah they were sovereignly released by the hand of God and everyone who was released had to have known that and they came back home to build and they were building out of the ruins and out of the rubble and they were trying to in waves and generations coming back into the homeland trying to make something out of what had technically become a mess and it's very similar to what you and I try to do we were given life and we we take that life and live it in a way that doesn't really bring honor to God we stray outside of the lines and we end up with a lot of a mess and we come back to the house of

God just like these people people came back into Israel and we start to rebuild this life in this testimony that God has given us and here's where we start Ezra the scribe and Nehemiah and others they gathered

the people together and they began to unlock the mysteries and the truths of the work of the Word of God and in verse 6 of chapter 8 I want you to bring yourself into this scene now if you will you're let's let's suppose we were standing there we're trying to build something that glorifies God out of what has become a mess we're trying to get back to what we've lost and it says in Ezra bless the people bless the Lord the great God and all the people answered amen and amen with lifting up their hands they bowed their heads they worship the Lord with their faces to the ground and

we've done essentially some of these things tonight and all of these people in verse 7 it says cause the people to understand the law and the people stood in their place in other words they there were men given the ability to unlock to open this book and and speak it in a way that people could understand it so they read in the book of the law verse 8 of God distinctly and gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading and Nehemiah which is the Tershatha and Ezra the priest the scribe and the Levites that taught the people said unto all the people this day is holy unto the Lord your God mourn not nor weep for all the people wept when they heard the words of the law in other words they they finally understood what they had done and there'd be a lot of sorrow I mean there there

were 70 years of sorrow there were there were families that were lost there were children that didn't make it there were there were homes and inheritances that were forfeited because of their behavior and what they had done and suddenly sitting in the presence of God with the God's Word open they understand understood what they had done just as can happen to you and I they understood why the mess had come into their lives in the first place then now Nehemiah says something incredibly to the people he says then he said to them verse 10 go your way eat the fat drink the sweet and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared for this day is holy unto our Lord neither be sorry for the joy of the Lord is your strength now they're just they're hearing what they had done wrong they're

seeing they're wrong for the first time they're understanding why such captivity and tragedy came into their lives their homes their families their their past they're in a place of trying to rebuild and around them it looks like it's ruins and suddenly they're told not to be sorry but go home and have a feast because the joy of the Lord is your strength so the Levites still all the people saying hold your peace for the day is holy and neither be aggrieved and all the people went their way to eat and to drink and to send portions that means to to share really this joy and to make great mirth great celebration because they had understood the words that were declared unto them now not just the words of the law which had shown them why they had come into such bondage but there were other

words that were declared to them and that's the cry of my heart tonight that somehow you can understand and I can fully appreciate myself what the joy of the Lord really is is it possible it's something that we've not really thought about are fully understood what is the source of this joy how do I partake of it do I just clap my hands until I just get into a frenzy and get happy do I go to a place where other people are happy and hope it's contagious to me what is the basis of this joy now so put a marker there now go with me in the New Testament to Luke chapter 15 we're going to hopefully have an understanding tonight of what the joy is and how I get it and how I keep it now in Luke chapter 15 there's a parable given by Jesus of a man who had two sons and one of these sons a younger one

suddenly one day it came into his heart that is I think is he filled his father's house was too restrictive too narrow there's more to life than this than coming to church and reading the words of my father and living in this and the borders of it there's more to life than this I've been born for more than this obviously the world's got to have something to offer me so this younger son just more or less escaped the borders of his

father's house and it says he took he took his he took his inheritance now we have an inheritance of a thinking mind we have an inheritance of a heart that can seek God we have we have a voice that can speak and we have the power of reason as a matter of fact we're the only thing in the entire universe that can say no to God did you know that everything else just

obeys the geese don't have a conference about when to fly south and who's going to lead and how are they going to do it they're simply programmed by God and they obey him the only one created in the image of God that was given the power in effect to reason and to say no was you and me and this younger son took this life and took this blessing of God and took the power to reason and took his future and everything it says he went far away from the house of his father far away many many people have done that in our generation some people have done that we're here tonight and says he spent his substance with riotous living and really in the in the original Greek it means self-consumption he just took this life that he was given and just spend it on himself and he he lived anyway he wanted to

live and he did what he wanted to do until the day that a mighty famine came into that land where he was living and suddenly a desire came into his heart because there was more to life than what he had found he tried to get help from people around him we were living in the same place he was but he couldn't find help there one day he came to himself and said I don't know what I'm doing here because the hired servants in my father's house have enough to spare enough bread to spare and I'm perishing with hunger that's got to be the testimony of somebody here tonight you didn't come here because you necessarily wanted to you came here because you're starving be honest with yourself I know there are people here like that tonight so I wouldn't be here if I wasn't in the condition I'm in my life

is a mess I went out I did my own thing I've got some background in church I went to Sunday school I sat somewhere my somebody read the Bible to me but I just took that and said well that's too narrow life's got a lot more to offer so I headed out for New York City land of opportunity heaven's waiting room everybody makes it big in New York City don't they no I guess not and so living and walking and trying and doing just left you in such a place where I said I'm dying of starvation I'm just going to give God's house to try one more time he said I'll arise and go to my father and say to him father I've sinned against heaven and before you and I'm no longer worthy to be called your son make me as one of your hired servants how shocked he was as he got up and he couldn't have been more than

a dot on a little dot on a map and and he's coming down the road and he's rehearsing his mantra what what am I supposed to say when I get back to church oh yeah I'm a sinner I'm not worthy make me a slave like my brother is you know my brother who just doesn't seem to have any joy but he never left like I did and make me like one like him and when he was a great way off it says his father had compassion saw him and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him what an incredible moment that must have been as he sees this this gray haired father come running down the road is his robe probably flowing behind him running as fast as maybe a 70 or 80 year old man can run and and falls on his neck and kisses him in spite of the fact that he's been in a field with pigs he stinks like any smell that

this world can put on him he's made a mess of his life he's drug addicted he's been into pornography he's been into relationship after relationship his mind is messed up he's lost his inheritance as he sees it and the man who actually was in charge of giving him his life in the first place comes running down the road and just falls on his neck and embraces him how shocking that is many people don't have that picture of God they have a picture of God is standing sitting on the throne with his arms folded in his right foot tapping say it's about time didn't I warn you when you headed out the mess you've made of your name the

mess you've made in the family oh the evil report that you brought of the father's house you are fortunate that I would even consider making you a slave in my house no

the father doesn't say any of that he runs and falls on his neck and kisses him so glad to have him home so glad so glad and I want you to know tonight that if you walk far away from God God is glad that you're here tonight there's a gladness in the heart of God there's you're not you haven't come to a place where a finger is pointing from God in your face no on the contrary there are two arms that are reaching out to you and running towards you and saying my son my daughter thank God you finally come home I've been waiting for you I've been sitting on the porch and I have watched you and I've heard reports about you and I've longed for you and now I see you face to face and you've come home the son starts his mantra father I've sinned and I'm no longer against heaven that sounds holy

doesn't it and in your sight and I'm no longer worthy to be called your son and expecting some kind of reply but the father doesn't even speak to him doesn't acknowledge anything he's saying doesn't nod his head in agreement doesn't do anything the first thing the father does is clap his hands and says bring out the best robe the one that is reserved for royalty and put it on him cover him how stunned that son must have been as the father brings out that robe and all he can do is lift his hands and allow them to put the robe that covers the smell of the field and the smell of the hogs and the smell of the addictions and the smell of what he's done and it's all covered and as he's walking into his father's house it's as if he'd never sinned against God it's all covered we have a

righteousness the Bible says a cleanness in the sight of God that is not our own it is God's and it is freely given to those who know that they need a Savior Jesus said I didn't come to call the righteous to myself I came to call sinners to repentance I came to call those who know they need a Savior I came not to die for those who think they're holy in their own strength but for those who know they've made a mess of it all and they know they need mercy then how strange it must have been as if it'd be enough like for you and I sometimes we think it's God it'd be just enough that you covered my sin and my frailty and there's a stunned silence between him and the father as they walk down the road and suddenly another command is given the father says bring out the ring of authority the ring

that represents my power and my authority and my name and put it on the finger of my son that ring that bears a royal seal that has the power of God behind it the power of God to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy the power of God to stand against every voice in society that would try to condemn him again and to declare that he has a righteousness not his own but given to him of his father the power of God to speak into darkened places and as he had received the love of God to see the love of God go through that spoken word into places that only God can reach the power of God to become what he could never be in himself to go where he could never go in his own strength and and to have what he never could hope to possess freely given to of his father then

the father says and put shoes on his feet now it speaks of a journey you know in the Bible when when God tells Moses take off your shoes tells Joshua take off your shoes he's basically saying no farther in your strength no farther with your strategies no farther with your plans but when we're ready to walk with God that he says now put your shoes back on and he brings out the shoes and puts them has them put on the feet of his son says now son we're going to have a journey together because you're about to learn something of me that many people don't know people who stand in their own sense of goodness people who could point in your face and say well I've never made the message you've made people who seemingly all their lives have been good and are quite proud of how good they have been

and they've not done what you've done but they're not going to know what you know then with the shoes on his feet and the ring on his hand and the robe on his back he brings the son into the house and says to the musicians bring out the instruments kill the fatted calf we're gonna have a feast and let's dance because the older brother it says when he came to the house he heard music and dancing amazing picture comes into my mind when I see this as the Sun is just barely inside the door just like many of you tonight that are here you're barely barely inside the door of God's kingdom and he's standing there and he's got a robe that's not his own he doesn't the people inside don't even know what he's done and quite frankly it looks like nobody really cares he's got a ring of authority on his

hand that everybody looks and goes whoa look at did you see that the authority the giftings has given to this young man he's got shoes on his feet which is an evidence that he's been invited by his father onto this incredible journey of faith that's about he's about to be the blessing it was supposed to be in the beginning and the band starts to play and the fatted calf is put on the table and it's a celebration like nothing this young man has ever seen in his life but what tops it all off is suddenly his father starts to dance I've seen it only once in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem I'm sure pastor Davis you've seen it a lot of times that the way that the Jewish dance goes his father just starts to dance and the boy is standing there and suddenly realizes that it's his father's joy to

cover his sin it's his father's joy to put a ring of authority on his hand it's his father's joy to invite him on this journey it's not his joy it's his father's joy and that's why the joy of the Lord becomes his strength that's what Nehemiah was trying and Ezra trying to tell the people yes you've made a mess and yes you went into captivity and yes you've come home and yes it looks like you're building with ruins but you need to know you've come home because you are still the joy of your father God you are still the joy of his heart and it is it is the father's joy to cover your sin it is the father's joy to put a ring of authority on your hand it is the father's joy to invite you on a journey of telling others about the mercy that you yourself have received that's why Nehemiah said go

home eat the fat drink the sweet and send something to somebody else who doesn't understand this yet tell somebody what God has done for you hallelujah to the Lamb of God glory to the Lamb of God glory to the name of Jesus the joy of the Lord is my strength that's what it is and that's how I keep it it's that mental picture in my mind that should be in yours now that no matter how your day is gone the father is still dancing over you with the holy angels in heaven he's not ashamed of you he hasn't rejected you he loves you with a passionate love so deep so profound so powerful that it's sent him to a cross to pay the price for your wrong so that you may have the privilege again in your life of knowing that it is the joy of God to receive you and to restore you when this knowledge

comes into your heart I have to tell you you have to want to go to hell after that point you have to want to you have to you have to profoundly choose to go to hell when you finally see how much God loves you his joy history that's that's what we sing about it's not mine it's his and when I finally see it it becomes my strength it's his joy how when's the last time you saw God dancing over you he says I will rejoice over you with singing it's in the scriptures it's there we just are so dull to seeing it we get a view that that God became a man came to the earth because he felt some obligation to redeem us this mess that he created that rebelled against him and he just oh I might as well go down and die for them they'll never get out of hell on their own somebody's got to do something and

many people have that view of God and they go they completely gloss over the scriptures that I'm reading to you tonight and and just even the what the Prophet Isaiah said a nursing mother may forget her child

but I cannot forget you I have loved you with an everlasting love I've engraved you on the palms of my hands this passionate love of God for his children no matter what you have done or where you have been or what you look like or what kind of a mess you have brought into the house of God tonight above and beyond everything else I want you to know that Jesus Christ passionately loves you hard for some people to accept that maybe you were raised under an older there was this young man had an older brother who was just harsh he he had what I call a joyless goatless religion came to his

father and says you never even gave me a goat to celebrate with my friends after I've so faithfully served you all these years and the father said to him son everything I have has always been yours he wasn't talking about the the palace and the the farm instruments and he was talking about his heart everything I have has always been yours I've always wanted to give you this understanding of what my work is in the earth you know folks when there's no greater joy in the heart of God than over one sinner who repents and if we choose to have that heart he'll give it to us and become partakers of that joy every time we see a soul turn to God there's something in us that should cause us to want to join the party and dance it shouldn't be just a whole hum thing you know or people come home and

and say well how was church tonight well it wasn't very good there's only two people got saved I mean how tragic is that because the whole of heaven is dancing over those two people the scripture says the angels in heaven are rejoicing why are they rejoicing it's because they know what's in the heart of God and they're just simply joining in what's going on in the heart of God and there's and you can just picture in your mind that heaven is rejoicing and there's there's clapping whether it's feathers your hands your wings I don't know what their clap all different kinds of created beings are shouting glory to God it's all going and we go home and say oh it wasn't very good there's only two people say no he says whatever I what I've had has always been yours if you wanted it you could have

had it and I don't know about you but I want that heart I want I want to understand the joy of the Lord I want to enter into the joy of the Lord and I want to keep the joy of the Lord by being an ambassador of Jesus Christ in my generation and not looking on the salvation of one soul is somehow I remember I remember the man who won me to Christ before he died one year he said to me he was so disappointed he looked so discouraged and I said what's wrong and he said you know you're the only one I ever won to Christ I remember saying to him what am I chopped liver or something was it not worth it and is that is that a defeat in your life because I'm the only one you ever won to Christ does that mean your life has not been worth it coming to my door was it was a waste of time spending three

months trying to talk me into my salvation not giving up that was all a lost effort because I was the only one you ever won to Christ it's strange sometimes how we think tonight I want to give an altar call I want to give an altar call for now we have this word that we use in the Christian church we use a lot of words that people don't understand backslider is one of them you know I'm first time I heard it I thought I had a picture of somebody going down like cuz I'm from Canada down a hill in the wintertime on their back you know no idea what they're talking about you might be a backslider or are you written in the Lamb's Book of Life and which really means that you had you had some knowledge or some relationship with God and you were moving in the right direction and suddenly you took

off and went in the wrong direction that's what it means you slid back from wherever you were you've slid back from there it's really what it means you were walking with God at least marginally and it could be when you were a child that was it was something in your heart but you walked away from it and now you're you've made a mess and you're trying to build out of the rubble but I want you to know tonight that it is the

Lord's joy to restore you it's the Lord's joy it's his joy and if you could come down to an altar like this tonight or in the front of this auditorium and finally see that that I'm not coming here to make any promises to God because my promises are worthless I can't keep them but I'm just going to lift my hands and let him put the robe on me I'm gonna put out my hand and

let him stick the ring of authority on my finger and I'm gonna lift my foot and let him put shoes on me because that's all I can do and the rest is up to him and he promises to live inside of me and change me from the inside out and invite me on this journey and what's going to be my message what am I going to tell this generation mercy it's the mercy of God that saved me it's the love of God that keeps me it's the joy of the Lord that gives me a song that the world can't take away from me it's all mercy I live by mercy I'm cleansed by mercy I grow by mercy I'll become what I'm going to be by mercy everything is mercy in my life and that will be your message and I'm telling you that's a message that people can relate to in New York City it's not a list of do's and don'ts in the kingdom of

God just do this or come back and be a slave in the house of the Lord no it's come home and receive the mercy of God let God touch your life let him set you free from everything that captivated you and give you authority over what dominates your mind and is robbing your home and robbing your family and causing you to think you have no future and let him put shoes on your feet and send you out to tell others all around that what God did for me he can do for you that is the Christian message if you have walked away from God I want to simply invite you to come home just come home don't come home with your your your your prayer of I must I'm unworthy make me a slave just be quiet just come home and let God touch you come home and let Jesus Christ fall on your neck and embrace you just come

home and lift your hands and let him cleanse you of your sin let him cleanse you living in a way you shouldn't be living in you know but let him cleanse you let him give you the power to start this new life that he promises to those who belong to him and let him put shoes on your feet and send you out with something for other people who really desperately need it in this hour hallelujah to the Lamb of God I'm so thankful that salvation is not a program I'm so thankful if you have walked away from God if you're not even serving the Lord tonight and you know you need him and you want to walk with him he wants to walk with you as much as you want to walk actually more than you want to walk with him I want to ask you as we stand in just a moment to get out of your seat and just come to the

front of this auditorium and we're gonna pray together and then we're gonna shout and we're gonna rejoice over you we're gonna rejoice with the angels in heaven as God touches your life now we're gonna stand in a moment in the balcony go to either exit and the main sanctuary slip out of where you are and for your soul's sake please in Jesus name get out of where you are and just come and let God touch you let him touch your life I can tell you conclusively you will never be the same again hallelujah the joy of the Lord you can take the joy of the Lord his joy is a take-home joy you can take his joy home with you tonight you don't have to leave it here in the sanctuary let's stand and if this is you come just come make your way out please wherever you are and we're gonna pray together come

as you are you came with a friend bring your friend just come unashamedly if you're in sin come that means you're doing things you know are wrong and God's Word says are wrong but you don't want to live that way anymore just come just come praise God don't be ashamed he's not ashamed of you just come come back to God do it quickly let's sing for a moment Greg if we will please then we'll pray together hallelujah just take a moment tonight those that have come here and just it's so hard for you and I sometimes to picture God embracing us and loving us remember he didn't come to die for good people

who came to die for sinners those of us who have made a mess and we know we need a Savior he loves you he loves you there was a great theologian one time nearing the end of his life and somebody

asked him of all the things you've studied and all the things you've learned what is the greatest truth of everything that's ever been revealed to you and without hesitation he looked at his questioner and said Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so hallelujah hallelujah I'm not gonna ask you to pray because the father didn't ask for anything of his son I'm gonna ask you to just lift your hands and in your in your mind let him let God put that robe of Christ's cleansing on you you're here tonight because you don't want to live in sin anymore you don't want to do what you've been doing you don't want to be in bondage to what you've been in bondage to so first of all let him cleanse you and then take your hand and raise it up one of your hands and say put the ring of authority

on me there's power in the name of Jesus the devil has no right to control my life anymore he's given me authority to step on the devil and all of his weapons and all of his lies and he's given me the promise of a new life he died to give me a new life and I'm gonna stop singing the same old tune and he's gonna put shoes on my feet tonight and I'm gonna start telling other people about how good God is and what God has done for me I'm not perfect but I'm gonna change by the grace of God I'm going to change and be the man be the woman that God designed me to be I'm not living under my privilege any longer I'm going to live for Christ I'm gonna get plugged into a good church you have to say I'm gonna find somewhere where they preach from the Bible and have a new believers class and I'm gonna

get into that and grow in the knowledge of whom my Savior is hallelujah hallelujah and I'm gonna let tonight I want to just encourage you tonight I'm gonna pray for you but will you just let Jesus rejoice over you tonight will you just let him rejoice will you just let him rejoice could you imagine if the son had said to the father no not me no stop stop the party stop the music stop the banquet how much it would have changed that story but he didn't he just was overwhelmed God Almighty you love me you love me you love me the way I am and you're going to give me the life you've always wanted me to have a father I pray for these that have come tonight Lord you've unlocked something from the scriptures to us tonight and you've given us an understanding of where do we get joy and how do we

keep it I pray God that the devil not have any more sway into the minds of those who have come no more lies no more believing that there's some mysterious happiness out there no we found what we need in the house of God we found it from the Son of God we found it in the living relationship with God through Jesus Christ we found it in the power of his Holy Spirit whom he promises to give to all of those who call out to Jesus Christ as their Savior I pray for these Lord I pray God Almighty you put shoes on all of our feet and give us a message to this generation that what God has done for me God will do for you I ask you to give us the ears to hear what's happening in heaven this very moment as we turn from our sin and receive Christ as our Savior and come back into a living relationship

with God give us the ears to hear what it sounds like in heaven tonight in Jesus mighty name folks show them show them what it sounds like in heaven that's what it sounds like in heaven tonight that's what it sounds like glory to God that's what it sounds like hallelujah hallelujah Thank you, Jesus.

You don't let the devil take that away from you tonight.

That's what it sounded like in heaven when you walked, when you got out of your seat and headed down that aisle, there was a chorus that broke out in heaven over you. It's not about multitudes. It's about you.

It's about individual people that God loves. Now before we go tonight, you can stay at the altar. Before we go tonight, we're going to spend five minutes.

I'm going to ask Pastor Patrick to come and lead us in prayer. And I want us to pray that everybody in New York City be given a chance to know what these people know tonight. Can you believe with me? You believe with us for that tonight? I believe that with God, all things are possible.

I believe he can make a way. I believe he's making a way. I believe that because I ask and you ask, I ask for every man, every woman, every child to have an opportunity to hear about the love of God through Jesus Christ, the opportunity to escape hell and end up in heaven when it's all over and to live for God in the power of the Holy Spirit while we live on the earth.

I believe that when I ask God, he will answer my prayer. There's 1800 of us here tonight. We're going to lift our voices for five minutes to the throne of God.

And we're going to believe God for a mighty spiritual awakening in New York City in our time. Let's do that right now. Lift your voice, begin to pray for your family members, your neighbors, your co-workers, your classmates.

Let's begin to pray for the churches around this city. Father, we lift our voices to you tonight. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. We lift our voices all over this place, Lord. Each of us have family members.

We all have co-workers that need to know you. Those around us that need to know the same love that you've revealed to our hearts once again tonight. They need a revelation of this love, oh God.

We cry out for them, Lord. We cry out for our aunts. We cry out for uncles.

We cry out for brothers and sisters. God, we cry out, Lord Jesus, for our parents. We cry out for our children.

Lord, we cry out for the sake of our co-workers, our classmates, that you would come by your spirit and visit this city once again, Lord, with an outpouring of your spirit like never before, oh God, that you would send the latter rain, oh God, the latter rain, Lord, over this city, the latter rain, over every pastor, every church, Lord, every minister, Lord, every minister of music, every youth leader, oh God, every youth worker, oh God, every counselor, Lord, every children's ministry leader, oh God, Sunday school teacher, that you would visit each one, Lord, with a revelation of your spirit and what is truly your joy, that it is the Father's joy, it is your delight to give us the kingdom, like your word says, it is your delight, oh God, Lord, that you do, in fact, rejoice over us with

singing, God, we lift our voices to you, oh God, make us, Lord Jesus, make us, Lord Jesus, make us, oh God, aware, Lord, of the incredible privilege, Lord, that we have as your people to be fishers of men, God, help us to walk in this joy, Lord, on our jobs, in our homes, God, animate us, we ask that you would animate us, that we would be animated, Lord, by this love and this joy, this revelation of your heart, let this revelation of your heart, let it animate us, let it, Lord, motivate us, let it, oh God, lead us, let it inspire us, let it, oh God, cause us, Lord, to have your heart, Lord, for those around us, Lord Jesus, that need to know this same love, God, we cry out to you tonight, we cry out to you tonight, we cry out to you tonight, Lord, Lord, for the sake of our family, Lord, I

pray for the sake of my cousins, oh God, for the sake, oh God, of my neighbors, Lord Jesus, I'm believing you tonight that you will do what only you can do, God, that you will visit pastors, Lord, and leaders, and that you reveal this heart to them, Lord, that they will know your joy and your love, Lord, that you'd, in fact, rejoice over them, I pray that you would silence the voice of the condemner, silence the voice of the enemy, silence the voice, Lord, of the accuser, of the brethren, silence his voice, Lord, over your people, Lord, silence his lies, his voice, oh God, in the name of Jesus, that your church will arise, Lord, your church, that your body will arise, God, I thank you that you're gonna cause your people to arise, Lord, you're gonna cause your church, you're causing your

church to arise, you're revealing your heart, you're revealing these simple, old, tried and true, proven truths, Lord, to us once again, so we can have a clear vision of who you are, so that we can properly represent you in this, our generation, God, we just thank you, Lord, we thank you, Lord, Lord, we thank you for those that you will place in our paths, oh God, Lord, those that you will give us the opportunity to show this love to, oh God, let our hearts continually beat as yours, Jesus, let our hearts beat as yours, oh God, we believe you, we cry out to you, Lord, we cry out, let it rain in this city, let it rain, God, in this generation, let it rain, Lord, in the house of God, let it rain, oh God, let your presence come down, let your glory come down in your house, let your glory

come down in our homes, that there would be such a joy in our homes, such a joy in our homes, such a joy in our marriages, such a joy, Lord, in our relationships with one another and with our children, Lord, and with our workers, Lord, with those around us, such a joy in knowing your heart, Lord, for us, God, we just thank you for this knowledge, we thank you for this joy, oh Lord, we thank you that it's your joy to give us the kingdom, it is your joy to give us, Lord, the loss, it is your joy, Lord Jesus, to cause us to walk in freedom, it is your joy, oh God, your word says, Jesus, that you will withhold no good thing from those that walk uprightly, hallelujah, we thank you that you don't withhold anything, that you've given us the keys to the kingdom, you've given us authority over the

powers of darkness, God, we thank you, Lord, that every promise in the book is ours, Father, we rejoice, Lord Jesus, thank you for showing us your heart once again, thank you for revealing your love to us once again, thank you for showing us your devotion to us once again, thank you, Lord Jesus, for what you're going to do in our generation, thank you, oh God, thank you, Jesus, thank you for your heart, thank you for this clear vision of the Father's heart tonight, of your joy over us, God, that you rejoice over us, that you're rejoicing over us, oh God, thank you that you will cause us to walk in this revelation on a day-to-day basis, that your joy will be our joy, oh God, hallelujah, hallelujah, this knowledge will be our joy, thank you that you have silenced the voice of the condemner

tonight, that you have broken the mouth, Lord, the teeth of the devil tonight over our lives, his lies have been shattered, God, we belong to you, we are your children, hallelujah, God, we bless you tonight for what you're going to do in the name of Jesus, now give him a shout of praise tonight, hallelujah, hallelujah, you're going to use us, you're using us, you're sending us as ambassadors of this joy, Lord, to this generation, we thank you in Jesus' name, hallelujah.

Praise God, we're going to sing one choir special tonight and then we're going to go, but folks, I want you to rejoice, the Lord wants you to rejoice tonight and don't leave your joy at exit one, two, three, four or five, whatever your exit number is, don't leave your joy there, take it into the subway, the parking garage, take it into your car, take it home, take it home, take it home, and when you get home tonight, take a moment and dance, I'm serious, take a moment and dance in your apartment, take a moment, lift your hands and join

the party, hallelujah.

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