

# Joyful Christians

by Sandeep Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of finding joy in the Lord regardless of circumstances or feelings. It highlights the need to disconnect joy from dependency on feelings and circumstances, focusing on obedience and faith. The story of turning water into wine at a wedding is used to illustrate the process of seeking joy through obedience, crucifying the flesh, and ultimately relying on the Holy Spirit for true joy and transformation.*

**Scripture:** Philippians 4:4, John 2:1, Psalms 16:11, Hebrews 12:2, Romans 14:17, Luke 10:20, Hebrews 1:9, Luke 10:20

**Topics:** "Joy in the Lord", "Obedience and Faith"

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## Description

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## Transcript

The subject for today is the joyful Christian. So, interesting topic when you're leaving a conference. I'm sure it's sad in many ways because it's been a good time together with friends and all of that.

But it's appropriate because we so easily connect joy with feelings. And we so easily connect joy with circumstances. And right off, at the very beginning, I want to make a disconnect between joy and my circumstances.

And to make a spiritual break between joy and feelings. And I want to make a spiritual break between joy and my feelings. There's an expression that Paul uses a few times.

He says, rejoice in the Lord always. Rejoice always. I don't know if you know which is the first book in the New Testament that was written.

Not the first book in the New Testament, but the first book of the New Testament that was written. Historians say it's 1 Thessalonians. And 1 Thessalonians 5, Paul says, rejoice always.

And in 1 Thessalonians 5, Paul says, rejoice always. 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 16. So, the very first book of the written scripture of the New Testament, God's trying to tell his people, rejoice always.

God wants to tell his people, rejoice always. Many years later, over a decade later from what history tells us, Paul wrote another book, Philippians. This time Paul's in jail.

Paul's in not a very nice jail in Rome, or somewhere by the Romans. But he repeats the same thing a couple of times in that book, Philippians. Rejoice always.

He was not treated kindly. But he was very clear. Whether in good circumstances or bad circumstances.

Whether I'm free preaching the gospel or if I'm in prison. The message is the same. Rejoice in the Lord.

So, joy is something that has got nothing to do with circumstances or my feelings. See, this is something that's probably going to take a long time for us. It's an addiction that we have to get over.

See, this is a kind of addiction that we have to get over over a long period of time. We have an addiction to read the Bible and to connect the English word or the Dutch word to the Bible concept. So we use the word believe and we think, do you believe this? It's like, do you have an intellectual agreement with it? That's got nothing to do with the Bible definition of belief.

Of course you should agree with your mind. But belief is something you have to do in your heart. We have to make that distinction.

I think some of you or many of you know that. That belief is not an intellectual agreement. Another word is humility.

Very different from what the English dictionary says to what the Bible definition is. Same thing with joy. I guarantee you, it's like me, you connect joy with a feeling.

And it's okay to use it in a human setting when you're talking to people and using the language. But when I'm reading the Bible and saying, I must have joy. And when the Bible commands me to rejoice always.

I must disconnect it from a feeling. Otherwise I'll get discouraged. Or I'll find the Bible command to not work.

Feelings may come afterwards. Feelings may not come at all. Feelings may come right away.

But I must disconnect joy from being dependent on the feeling. And we have to disconnect joy from my circumstances. I want to share with you the story where we can study a few things about how we get joy.

And that is the story of the very first miracle of Jesus. If you would have picked the very first miracle of Jesus. If God was to ask your opinion.

Hey, my son is coming to this earth. What's your advice? How do we make the biggest splash? Some of you are creating YouTube channels or whatever it is. Some of you have YouTube channels or social media accounts.

And you sometimes wonder how you can make the biggest impact. How do we get the most views, the most likes? We have to be provocative. Maybe we can come up with a miracle where someone is being raised from the dead.

Or immediately feeding the 5000. Immediately walking on water. Catching a whole boat full of fish.

Good ideas. But do you know what really was the first miracle of Jesus? Turning water into wine at a wedding. There are so many things wrong with that idea, you would think.

But God's ways are not our ways. Maybe it's not something with a lot of impact. But it had a meaning and a purpose, which is why he chose a wedding.

God had a reason why he chose to turn water into wine. It was intentional. And so we just want to go through a couple of points and connect it to joy.

The story, you may all know it. Is that Jesus and his mother and his disciples are at a wedding and the wine runs out. And as we know they served the good wine first.

And then they served the old wine or the bad wine and then even that ran out. That's the problem. So the setting is a beautiful setting, it's a wedding.

It should have been a time of great joy. It was a time of great joy. Until the wine ran out.

That can be a picture of our Christian life. We were born again. We were walking with the Lord.

We had a good life with the Lord. But then things happened. We stopped being consistent.

Church became a little bit more boring. The Christian life became a little bit more of a drag. Old wine.

New wine becomes old wine. Then the wine runs out. No joy in the Christian life anymore.

What's the first thing that we have to do? That's what Mary did. She came to Jesus. That's the very first thing we have to do.

Maybe the first thing we have to do is be honest. Before you even come to Jesus you have to be honest. I don't have what I had.

I used to have something. I used to have a relationship with the Lord. I used to have a connection with the Lord.

Or other people have talked about wine and I've never had wine. Or other people have talked about wine and I've never had wine. I'm talking about how in my relationship with Jesus, like with wine, you enjoy that there is joy in it.

Other people talk about it but I've never experienced that joy. Step number one is be honest. You have to admit it.

Step number two. We have to come to Jesus. Do you know what Jesus says? Do you want some new wine? Wait a minute.

That's what He says. My time hasn't come. What? Come on Jesus, give me the wine, I've come to you.

I want a different kind of church, just give me a different kind of church. I'm not happy with the way things are going. Just change the circumstances.

But my time hasn't come. What are you going to do? Then you do what Mary did. Mary shows her holiness here, her purity.

I'm not saying that we worship Mary. But she was a saint. She was absolutely a holy woman of God.

Look what happens when God says, wait a minute. It's not my time yet. Do you know what Mary says? She says to the servants.

In John 2, verse 5. Whatever He will say to you, do it. Do you know what that shows? It's my spirit telling my mind. My spirit telling my feelings.

Whatever Jesus tells you to do. You be ready. Whenever He's ready.

No complaining. No pouting. When He tells you to do something, you do it.

Until then you wait. Like servants waiting to be called on. Like waiters waiting in a restaurant.

I'm ready. I'm waiting. Some of us lose our way here.

Because we get upset at Jesus. We get offended at Jesus saying, it's not my time. We want instant miracles.

So when we come to Jesus and say, Lord, I've been coming for two weeks to church, it's not working out. I'm reading the Bible, I'm not getting out of it. It's not worth it, let's just set it aside.

Whatever He says, you do it. And we have to wait. For the Lord's time.

Because the Lord is saying, I wonder if He'll go to something else to numb this pain. Because the Lord is saying, I wonder if He'll go to something else to numb this pain. Does He really know that I'm the only one who can solve this problem? I'd like to give Him some patience.

How can I give Him patience if He always gets whatever He wants whenever He asks me? Will you wait for the Lord? When your circumstances, even though these are holy desires of yours. The old wine is run out. You're looking for a new joy.

Will you wait? The attitude of a worshipper. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? There's no one on earth. That can help me with my problems but You.

There's no one who can give me joy and new wine like You. The world won't give me that. The world can't give me that.

The pleasures of the world can't give me that. But I'll wait. And then Jesus says, I won't give you joy right away, I want to give you another assignment first.

And He says to the servants, fill the water vats with water. And in verse 6 it tells me how much water that had to be filled. There were 6 water vats with 20 to 30 gallons each.

Do we need to convert that to liters? 500? 500 liters. And there were no big holes to just turn on the tap. No one could turn on the tap with a garden hose and fill it up.

500 liters. Just try to fill it up. And then it says in verse 7, they filled it up to the brim.

What do you think, 2 minutes? To carry the water back and forth? 500 liters in total. Through your wine? Well what are we doing filling the water vats with water then? Whatever He says, do it. We want some

answer to prayer.

What Jesus asks us to do doesn't seem anywhere connected to that. Whatever He says, do it. I'll tell you what He says to do.

Die to your feelings. Over and over and over and over again. And I'm not saying it's easy.

I'm actually a rather feelings guy. I feel quite a bit. And so, I've had to die to my feelings quite a bit.

I've enjoyed my feelings. I enjoy music. I enjoy art.

All kinds of feelings. And I've got to die to the feelings compared to the truth of God's word. Over and over and over again.

With no joy in sight. Filling water pots with water. No wine in sight.

No joy in sight. Jesus tells me to die to myself. There's a verse about joy that is in Psalm 16, verse 11.

Some of you may know it. We may quote it flippantly. We may quote it just casually.

But it's a very deep verse. Psalm 16, verse 11. In your presence is fullness of joy.

But I want to ask you a question. This is a Psalm by David. Where was God's presence in David's time? Do you know where it was? In the most holy place.

Did you know that? That's where the cloud was. That's where God's presence was. And David could never get there.

He was not a high priest. And in the Old Testament, only the high priest could go to the most holy place once a year. In your presence is fullness of joy.

In the tabernacle there were three parts. You saw a picture of that, I believe, yesterday. The outer court.

And then there was a tent part. And there were two parts in the tent. A holy place and the most holy place.

And separating the holy place from the most holy place was what's called a veil, a curtain. And all of the Israelites could be in the outer court. You could offer the bowl of sacrifices.

You had the lava for washing, which is a picture of baptism. Only the Levites could go into the holy place, that covered part. That's where you had the altar of incense.

The bread, which is a picture of God's word. And the lampstand. Denoting the people of Israel.

All the Levites could be there. There was a curtain. And the most holy place where the ark was.

Even the priests couldn't go there. Cheap priests went there once a year. The reason that I'm explaining this is God's presence wasn't in the outer court.

God's presence wasn't in the holy place. Not in the baptism, not in the repentance. Not in the reading of God's word.

Not in the incense, which is a prayer. Not in the lampstand, which is a picture of your church life. God's presence is in the most holy place.

In your presence is fullness of joy. So what is it for us in the New Testament? We have to go past our Bible studies. We have to go past our prayer life.

We have to go past all our church activities. We are all priests now, that's what we do. But that's still the holy place.

God's presence is in the most holy place. Well how do I get to the most holy place? There's a curtain stopping that. How do I get through that curtain? Jesus showed me the way to get through that curtain.

He tore that veil. And in Hebrews chapter 10 verse 20 He tells me that that veil is my will. It's my flesh, that will.

I don't get automatic access to the most holy place. To get into the Father's lap. It's through Jesus.

And it's through that rent veil. Saying no to what I want to do. That's what we do when we are first born again.

We say no to what we want to do and we say God says come right in. It's not difficult. The problem is that we don't know The prodigal son did it.

He didn't clean himself up. He just said I want to be with you. I don't want to do whatever I'm doing.

And the Father comes rushing out to meet him. And to take him into the most holy place. So it's not difficult.

But it's an important step we have to do. To get this fullness of joy. We have to not do our own will.

Which means we cannot live by how we feel. We cannot live by how we feel. We live by faith, not by our senses.

For most young people this is probably the only thing you probably need to hold on to for the next decade. But it is an important truth to hold on to for the next 10 years. Don't live by your feelings.

Live by what God's Word says. Become strong in God's Word. I'm serious.

Young people. Especially. Your feelings are raging.

It becomes a little bit less when you get older. It's a good thing to have a lot of those feelings. You can use that energy for the Lord.

But don't live by your feelings. Man shall not live by the feeling of food and whether you're hungry or not. You haven't eaten for 40 days.

Live by your feelings. No man shall live by the feeling of food and whether you're hungry or not. No man shall live by the Word of God.

This is what God was telling us in that temptation. He was 30 years old. Still a young man.

And he's saying, I will not live by my feelings. Irritate that will that says you don't feel right. You don't feel like doing the right thing.

You should irritate that will that says my hat doesn't fit. I don't feel like doing it. But tear that will.

Because in His presence is fullness of joy. Fill the water pots with water. 500 liters.

That's not easy. Nobody said that crucifying your flesh is easy. It's crucifixion.

Fix your eyes on Jesus. The author and finisher of your faith. Who for the joy set before Him What did He do? Endured the crucifixion.

Didn't enjoy the crucifixion. Endured the crucifixion. This is your Bible, Hebrews chapter 12.

Fix your eyes How did Jesus get joy? The joy was set before Him on the other side of that veil. He endured the cross of dying to His feelings. And it will never end.

It's not that after 15 years you get really good at it. Jesus, after 33 and a half years of living the perfect life in the garden of Gethsemane never once giving in to His own will in the garden of Gethsemane He said, Father, please take this cup away from me. I don't want to do what you're asking me to do.

But, He didn't finish the day. He said, not what I want to do but what you want to do. But He showed you but He showed me there that there was still the struggle.

After 33 and a half years of doing it perfectly of constantly saying no there was still a struggle. That taught me an incredibly important lesson that there's going to be a fight for the rest of my life. No easy button.

I remember with some of these things it takes such a long time. I remember, for example with the sin of the love of money. Lord, I don't want to be affected by the love of money.

I remember the Lord saying to me Okay. You fight radically the love of money for the next 30 years. And it will lessen in its immensity.

It will lessen in its strength. 30 years. What do you think? Do you want to do that? Do we want to please God? Next 30 years fight like blood comes out.

Do you want to be done with the love of money? Are we willing to sign up for 30 years of a fight? 30 hours is a long fight. What about with your feelings? What if the Lord tells you that? You spend the next 15 years fighting on your feelings. Keeping them in check.

That racehorse of your feelings it will get easier. 15 years. Do you want to sign up? 500 liters of water.

I got to tell you, it's not easy. Narrow is the way that leads to life. But on the other side is joy.

And this is the way Jesus went. We have to sit down and count the cost. Not stand up and sign a decision paper.

Sit down. It's going to take you 10, 15 years brothers and sisters, maybe. To get rid of this addiction to your feelings.

I spent a little time with addicts. I've been told that as many times that they've been addicted to something it takes that many years to get over it. Okay, how long have you been addicted to your feelings? God will help you.

Are you willing to take that time? I'll tell you who have taken that time. Some addicts. I've met some of these addicts addicted to alcohol or cocaine and other drugs and they've squandered everything.

For years addicted to them. But they've built their life back up. It took them years.

It took them many years. But they didn't expect instant miracles. But they didn't expect instant healing.

And they were thankful that they were still alive. That they lived one day at a time. And they prayed Lord give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.

And the courage to change the things I can change. And the wisdom to know the difference between those two. And they did it one day at a time.

Say no to alcohol one day, two days, a week, two weeks. And then you ask them was it long? Yes it was long. It took a long time.

Sometimes it was really hard. But they've done it. And I used to go sit in those meetings.

I was never addicted to alcohol. But I went to those meetings in my late twenties for a reason. Because I asked myself how come they without Jesus can get over alcohol and I with Jesus can't get over my feelings ruling me.

What am I missing? Do we even need Jesus? These folks without Jesus are able to get over alcohol and heroin. We can't get over our addictions to our feelings and other things that hold us down and with our eyes and lust and body image. What helped me change was to realize I'm an addict too.

And I'm not going to blame Jesus. And I'm not going to blame Jesus for not doing his part. But I didn't fill 500 liters of water in those vats.

Those alcoholics are doing that. They want to get free of it. So they see the difference.

You have to work hard. Day after day. I learned that from the addicts.

And God never said that it would be easy. Dear brothers and sisters I'm speaking from experience. John chapter 2 has changed my life.

Because when you count the cost of 500 liters of water the servants didn't know when the wine was going to happen. And we don't know how these things are going to change. But we have to decide that we're not going to live by our feelings.

We're not going to decide whether God loves us by our circumstances. A child gets sick a child gets healthy. A father gets cancer a father doesn't get cancer.

Lose eyesight keep my eyesight. Get the house lose the house. God my view of God is not going to change.

Not based on circumstances not based on feelings. We have to set our hearts to be fixed to that. Young people take my word for it.

Your life will be shaky. It was for me. Because constantly joked around by feelings.

So easily moved by circumstances. It is not like that anymore in my life. Because I made a decision years ago what I'm telling you today.

And I know no other way and it's no other way given in scripture. And the charismatic movement says you need deliverance. You got some demons affecting you or afflicting you.

You don't need deliverance. You need crucifixion. And nobody is going to crucify you.

Christ is not going to crucify you. You have to go pick up your cross and put your flesh to death. And you have to take your cross and crucify your flesh.

Over and over again. For a decade. Ten, three decades.

Five decades. For the rest of our lives. It's a marathon.

Nobody is dropping out of the race, are we? You need some fuel stations? Oh yes, we do. That's why I started with it. We need some fuel stations.

Go back to the cross. Go back to the Father's love. Fill up.

Because you got to fill up water pots with water for a long time. Go through the veil. Go through your will over and over again.

Have I spent enough time on this? Should I move on? It's a long time. But then Jesus says take some water and serve it. Actually He doesn't say take some water.

He says draw it out now. The crazy thing about this is I don't know when the water turns into wine. We don't know when we'll get the new wine.

But one thing is sure. Jesus will turn water into wine. When it is His time.

We fill the water pots with water. He'll produce new wine. He always does.

Those who do it His way. Jesus proved it. He sat down at the Father.

He enjoyed new wine all the time seated in the heavenlies with His Father. And I'm not saying that the whole time that I was filling up water with wine was just a boring horrible life. But I didn't depend on my feelings or my circumstances.

And I got lots of fuel from the gas station of the Father's lap and the cross in which Jesus died for me. But this is where water got turned into wine. This, dear brothers and sisters, after we... Please listen to me.

After we have filled the water pots with water 500 liters that's when we need the Holy Spirit. After we have crucified our flesh over and over again and we've done our part after you have done all that God has commanded you you go to God and say, I'm an unworthy slave. All I got is water.

All I got is obedience. I don't have the wine. I don't have the joy of the Holy Spirit.

I don't have the love. I don't have the peace. I've done a lot of obedience.

Romans chapter 14 verse 17 It says what the kingdom of God is. Romans chapter 14 verse 17 The kingdom of God is not eating or drinking but righteousness peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. I remember my wife saying many of us have righteousness joy and peace in our comfort.

Through our circumstances. We've got to take a vacation to find the joy. You get the bonus and you get the joy.

So the kingdom of God for us becomes righteousness joy and peace in our comfort. So the kingdom of God for us becomes righteousness joy and peace in our comfort. But this is what the Bible says.

Righteousness joy and peace in the Holy Spirit. It's in His presence. But that comes after I fill the water pots with water.

That's when I say Lord I've done so much. I'm still not happy. That is the real role of the Holy Spirit.

It's for those who want Him but are willing to pay the price. And are doing it in their daily life. John chapter 7 verse 37 Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit and this is the real this is at the end of a feast.

This is the feast. It was the feast of booths. Feast of tabernacles.

This was a week-long celebration. All the Jews got together in tents and then just ate and drank and had a good time. For a whole week.

And then on the last day John 7 verse 37 on the last day of the party-filled week Jesus says who is still hungry? Who is still thirsty? Who still wants more? Who is not satisfied after doing everything all the obedience year after year? Are you still thirsty? After obeying God week after week month after month year after year Lord I'm not happy I'm still not satisfied I've not gotten what you're supposed to be giving me. Jesus said you come to me and I'll give you rivers of living water from your inside. And John said he was talking about the Holy Spirit He couldn't get it without it.

It's those who are thirsty after a week-long conference. It's those who are thirsty for the divine life after years of obedience. Dear brothers and sisters the ministry of the Holy Spirit is so sacred and mysterious.

God gives you the Holy Spirit so easily. As often as I will give my children carrots if my children ask me for carrots. That's how easy it is for the Father to give me the Holy Spirit.

That's what Luke chapter 11 verse 13 says. If your child asks you for bread will you give him a stone? If you ask him for the Holy Spirit and you're hungry I'm going to give you the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes to help hold the nail to help hold the nail as you crucify your flesh.

He's not going to crucify your flesh. He'll help you hold the nail. You hold the hammer you hit him.

I say you hold the hammer your will and he groans and he mourns and he helps and he's there all the time. But there is a special ministry of the Holy Spirit. The water turning into wine aspect of the Holy Spirit.

After he's held the nails the nails where he says there's a fullness of joy and that only happens if we go to him after the water pots are filled with water. It's only for those who are willing to be obedient. Relentlessly obedient.

The Holy Spirit will help you to be relentlessly obedient but then the Holy Spirit will take over to take that water and make it into wine. There's nothing we can do about it. But we have to come to him.

Say Lord I'm not satisfied with perfect obedience. I'm not satisfied with water pots filled to the brim because I look into the water pot and it's just water and I look into my life and I just see human obedience. But I want divine joy.

I want the light that is the life of man. Sorry, the light that is the light of man. That lights up my life.

The kingdom of God which is righteousness joy and peace in the Holy Spirit. I don't have it after all my obedience. I must seek him for the Holy Spirit.

I'll show you another reason why you know you'll need the Holy Spirit. Why you need joy. Hebrews chapter 1 verse 9 Hebrews chapter 1 verse 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.

Therefore the Lord has anointed you with the oil of joy. I'll tell you something. I stay away from lawlessness.

I like righteousness. But this is different. He's saying you have to hate it.

Hate it! That's a different level. You got to absolutely love God's ways. You got to absolutely hate the way of sin.

I need the Holy Spirit for that. I dislike it. I don't enjoy it.

What about hatred? I want your joy. I need your Holy Spirit to take all of my obedience and my dislike for sin into a hatred for sin. This is why we need the Holy Spirit.

You ask yourself, brothers and sisters. Do you hate sin? Or do you dislike it? I know you don't want to sin. Is there a hatred? Some sins we hate.

But some sins are still too cozy in our lives. And we're fighting it. That's all we can do.

God says, I want to give you a hatred. Give it to Jesus. How can I get it? The Holy Spirit.

Because it's the Holy Spirit. So I'm not interested in going to these meetings where the Holy Spirit pushes me down. I shouldn't even have said that.

I don't even think it's the Holy Spirit pushing them down. I don't know what's pushing them down. But I don't want any of that.

Because I don't see those people getting back up and hating sin. But that's what I want. If the Holy Spirit will do that, I'll fall down 25 times.

I'll hang upside down. I want to hate sin though. I don't see these people doing any of these things, talking in unknown tongues, dancing up and down, waving the flags.

I don't see them hating sin anymore. I see greater greed. They're going in the opposite direction.

So no, I'd like to keep standing. Thank you very much. But I want to hate sin.

So what's the path? It's not a feeling. It's not the laying of the hands. It's not babbling something.

Gibberish. It's filling up the water pot. And going to Jesus and saying I need something more.

I need wine. It's the very first miracle you did. And you showed your glory there.

Man cannot manufacture this. I can do obedience. I can restrain my feelings.

That doesn't make me special. There are Hindus who do that. There are Muslim holy men who do that.

They're all living in the forest for the rest of their lives. But beyond that Lord, I need something else. The life of Christ.

That hates sin. I'm not going to give up. That's why we need the Holy Spirit after all our obedience.

One last thing, Luke chapter 10. I mentioned this earlier but it's worth repeating again. Jesus said don't pin your joy on casting out demons.

Luke chapter 10 verse 20. He said pin your joy in the fact that your name is recorded in heaven. What does that mean? That your name is recorded in heaven.

That Jesus took a wretch and made him a saint. Jesus took a wretch and said come sit on my lap. It's the very first of the story.

It's what you're trying to tell your children those of you who are married. For you who are married and have children. You know what the gospel is? Jesus can take all your sins away and make you sit on his lap.

They may not understand all the details like you can. But Jesus said that's where your joy has to be. I want to share with you the story that I read.

It's one of the oldest sermon illustrations used in the Christian church. So it's centuries old. But it's a good test of what our understanding of Christianity.

So pay attention to the story. There was a man who lived who was very deformed in his body. His face was distorted.

Nobody ever invited him to a party. Nobody showed him love or attention. So he decided that this life was not worth living.

He decided he was going to climb up a mountain and throw himself into the big cliff. As he's walking up this mountain he's going up the mountain and he meets a girl on the way. She's a very beautiful girl.

But she's walking up the mountain with the same purpose. She was suffering for very different reasons. She had everybody's attention and love.

But the one whom she wanted to marry decided to love another girl. Because that other girl was rich. So she too felt life had no meaning.

She said, I'm walking up the cliff going up the mountain to jump off the cliff too. So they're both walking up the mountain together. As they're keeping up the mountain they meet a police officer.

And this police officer is saying he's looking for a very dangerous robber. And he had robbed and murdered many people. And there was a huge reward for catching this person.

And the policeman was very confident that he would be able to catch this robber. Because this robber had a very unique physical mark. He had six fingers on his hand.

It was going to be very easy to spot him. And the police had been looking for him for lots of years and hadn't found him. And for the last two to three years they had not heard about him at all.

No murders, no nothing. But the policeman was serious about catching him so that he could pay the penalty for his sins. Finally they went to the top of the cliff and there's a monastery.

And there's a monastery there and they knew that that monastery was run by an abbot, by a priest. Who built that monastery to try and save people who were going to jump off. trying to save people who were going to jump off.

who were going to jump off. And this monk was not there for many, this priest wasn't there for many years, just a couple of years. They said, okay, let's say hello to him because they've known him as being very saintly.

And they stand outside the monastery and they see all these people's names who had been saved by this monk. And as they're looking at all the names the monk comes to meet them. And you could see the glory of God on his face.

The beautiful girl bows to kiss his hand and sees that his hand has six fingers. And that's where the story ends. And we don't like that ending because we want to know what happened.

What happened to the deformed man? Did he jump? What happened to the girl? Did she jump? Wait, the monk is the criminal? Did the policeman arrest the monk? After seeing the glory of God on his face? That's our human nature. We missed the beauty of the story. The murderer became a saint.

That's the story. The murderer became a saint. No matter what happens after this.

So they hung him. So they hung him. Still a saint.

So they let him go. Still a saint. The beautiful part of the story is that a murderer became a saint.

Jesus says, take this your joy. Your name is recorded in heaven. Has that happened? Dear brothers and sisters, is that true in your life? Find your joy in that.

You got six fingers? You murdered people? Can people start seeing the glory in your face? That's the story. What happens after that doesn't matter. This is the joy of the Holy Spirit.

This is the joy we can live. It's a joy that we have to go through the veil. It's a joy that requires filling lots of water pots with water.

It's a joy that is there only with the Holy Spirit that can give us. But it's a joy that can be found at the very beginning of our Christian life as well. Dear brothers and sisters, some of us, many of us, maybe all of us need to go back and understand what it meant to be born again.

Take me back to the place where I first received my sight and the burdens rolled away at the cross where I first saw the light. Take me back. You lost your first love.

Your heart has become lukewarm. Take me back. We have to stay there and see what a beautiful thing it is for our names to be recorded in heaven.

Six fingers or not, the glory of God is on His face. Lord, I want the glory of God on my face. I don't care how long it takes.

I'll fight my feelings. I'll crucify my feelings. It'll be worth it all.

Thank you dear brothers and sisters, thank you so much for having me. It's been a privilege meeting with all of you. I've been especially touched by all the young people and the number of questions you've had.

It tells me that you care. That you want it. Don't stop wanting it.

I hope I've shown you a couple of gas stations. I hope I've shown you through the word of God some ways in which you can keep moving forward. He's coming soon.

Any day now. It'll be a beautiful time. Thank you, Arjan, for having me.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, how thankful we are for you that six fingered men have the glory of God on their faces. People like us in this room have our names recorded in heaven.

Lord Jesus, open my eyes over and over again to this truth. Forgive me for all my complaining, for all my grumbling, for your ways over my life. I want to crucify all of my feelings that go against your will that tell me that you don't care.

That tell me that you're not good. That tell me that you can't work everything out for good. Lord Jesus, help me to be faithful.

Help us to be faithful. In Jesus' precious name we pray. Amen.

There's a lot of questions and answers, but there's one question that I have. It's about crucifying feelings. Does it seem as if feelings are not allowed at all? He means the same as Watchmeny that we should bring our feelings under control, under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Is that the same? And under control of the Holy Spirit. Our feelings are not bad. Thank you.

Our feelings are not bad. Who created our feelings? Not the devil. God did.

Every one of my feelings. Every one of your feelings. But my feelings can lead me astray.

There's a story of fact, faith and feeling. They were walking up a cliff. Fact was in front.

Faith was holding on to fact. And feeling was holding on to faith. Fact, faith, feeling.

Walking up a cliff. No problem. But feelings didn't feel good.

So they turned around. And let go of faith. And fell off a cliff.

And faith started looking about where feelings went. And let go of the facts of God's word. And fell off a cliff too.

Fact kept going on. We will live a happy life if our faith is holding on to the facts of God's word. And our feelings are always submitted to our faith.

Our faith that God is good. Thank you.

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