



Finding Overflowing Joy: Psalm 100:1-5

November 10, 2024

By Pastor Joshua Clough

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## Group Leader Notes

Pastor Joshua began with a birth announcement of his new baby girl, Elsie! Next time you see him wish him a hearty congratulations or send a card.

Today, we will begin a new sermon series, *The Joy of Generous Living*. Joy is different than happiness and other feelings. Joy is found in God's love and promise, and even more, through living with generosity and gratitude. I want to help us understand how we find joy, live with generosity, and practice gratitude. These three things are part of the generous life and the life of faith. So today, we're focused on joy. We spend a lot of time searching for joy, but sometimes we miss it, and it's right in front of us.

**Questions:** How much are you willing to invest so that others find joy? What will you invest of your time, talent and resources?

**Bottom Line:** When we invest in a generous life and give to the mission of God through the church, we experience joy and gratitude.

**Take Home Message:** This isn't a sermon series on money; it's about how we find joy in generous living by giving our time, talent, and resources; it's about how joy, generosity, and gratitude lead us into a deeper life of faith. Consider how our giving is not only part of Jesus' invitation to us but also how Jesus helps us to love and serve others through our church. What we find is joy in generous living.

**Main Scripture Reading:** Psalm 100:1-5

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

<sup>3</sup> Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his<sup>[a]</sup>;  
we are his people, the sheep of his  
pasture.

<sup>4</sup> Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise;

give thanks to him and praise his name.

<sup>5</sup> For the Lord is good and his love endures  
forever;

his faithfulness continues through all  
generations.

## Other Scripture References

Psalm 126:3

Philippians 4:4

John 15:9

Isaiah 12:2-4, 6

John 15:11-13

**Teaching Points:**

- The 4 sources of joy are the joy we find in:
  - good things or when good things happen to us
  - experiences
  - paying attention to joyful things around us, pausing to be mindful of the good around us
  - our relationships and the time we spend with other people

\*\*The deepest is our relationship with Christ\*\*
- There is something about giving ourselves to others, investing in others, and in a community that brings us joy.

**Group Discussion**

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. In preparation for the sermon, Pastor Joshua searched the Bible and found over 500 verses that mention *joy, joyful, rejoice, or rejoicing*. Ask your small group to share any of their favorite Bible verses that include joy.
2. Louis Smedes, a Christian author, said: *You and I were created for joy and if we miss it, we miss the very reason for our existence*. Discuss some everyday examples of how you can miss opportunities to experience joy, even when it is right in front of your face.
3. Pastor Joshua took some time to acknowledge the range of responses to the presidential election results. Some of us might be experiencing joy, excitement, and celebration, whereas others might be experiencing grief, despair, sadness, or fear. Then he reminded us that God is King, ruler of the universe, and creator of everything.
  - Whether your candidate won or lost, how will you seek first the Kingdom of God and pursue joy?
4. Ask a member of your group to read The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37 NIV).
  - Why did the Priest and the Levite walk past the man who was robbed and beaten?
  - What were they thinking as they walked past?
  - How do you think they felt about it afterward?
  - Why did the Samaritan stop to offer help?
  - What was he thinking when he stopped?
  - How do you think he felt about it afterward?
5. Read the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30 ESV)
  - Why did the servant who was given one talent choose to bury it in the ground? Ask your group to think of some reasons why he did not invest it as the other two servants did.
  - Verse 29 says: *For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away*. What does this mean to you?

6. Ask your group for volunteers to share how, specifically, they have invested their time, talent and/or resources to God's mission through the church. Ask them to explain the joy they experience from generous living.

**Let's Pray:** John 15:9-12

<sup>9</sup> "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.