

SUNDAY MORNING (December 22nd) • HOLINESS

The Peace and Joy of Holiness

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Rom 14:17)

There can be no doubt from his revelation to mankind that God intends the Christian life to be a life of joy, not drudgery. The idea that holiness will be inseparably tied to a miserable life is an absolute lie. In fact, just the opposite is true. Only those who walk in holiness experience true joy.

How does a self-centered, godless approach to life PROMISE “joy,” but ultimately lead to emptiness and the absence of true joy?

On the flipside, consider the words of Jesus in John 15:10-11.

“If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

When Jesus spoke of his joy, what did he have in mind?

Practically speaking, how can the joy of Jesus be “in” me?

How will this lead to joy that is “full”?

Long ago, David wrote of God in Psalm 16:11, “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” What can we learn from these words?

The same David, after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, pleaded with God in Psalm 51:12, “Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.” What can we learn from these words?

In your own words, how would you summarize the relationship between holiness and joy? In what way can “the joy of the LORD” be “your strength” (Neh 8:10)?