

Joy in the Time of War  
Psalm 16 August 16, 2020

**Main Point:** The times we are in present many opportunities for trouble, anxiety, fear, and suffering. What do we do? How do we handle what we are going through? Psalm 16 gives us weapons with which to fight and win. Anxieties and fears are overcome by the Holy Spirit at work through His Word. God promises to give joy invincible to those who go to Him.

**SI:**

David tells us that he is in some sort of trouble – Right off he says, Preserve Me, help me, keep me safe.

10 mentions of words associated with joy – delight, pleasures, rejoicing – listen for these - David has Joy in the Lord. He is overcoming trouble with joy in the Lord.

Definition of joy: A delight in life that runs deeper than pain or pleasure. A gift of God, that, like all of His inner gifts such as peace, assurance, faith, can be experienced even in the midst of very difficult circumstances. (from *Evan. Dict of Theol.*)

**Intro:**

Not playing around with this, not anymore. No more giving it quarter for a few months and then it will be over and back to normal. You know, I could do that.

But this enemy might require some bigger guns. And of course it's not just Covid. Election season, national politics, and words like fog, malaise, and then college football being cancelled – wait, what?

School starting – For those of you in back to school mode, it's normally a time of excitement and eager anticipation of new year and new friends. This year it's not quite the same.

My kids experience with going back to Auburn and mostly online classes and then... tuition raised.

In war you need defensive measures and offensive weapons. You need to defend against attacks and attack the enemy.

So what we are looking at is not just joy... joy as a goal, an emotion, a feeling only, but joy in the Lord in the sense of this is the chief purpose for which we are made – to enjoy God now and forever. I want us to see 4 aspects of joy in the Lord that give us what we need to fight and win the battle for our souls to have joy.

Joy in the Lord is Armor, a Weapon, a Choice, and as Near as your right hand.

### **1Joy in the Lord is Armor (v. 1, 4)**

David's immediate situation – He is on the run, enemies are pursuing him.

So what does David do? He cries out to the Lord for protection, for safety, for refuge.

Yes, we pray for and work hard for a vaccine. We might need a bigger shield than the wishes for a vaccine against a coronavirus.

v. 4 > David picks up this big shield - Joy in the Lord is a shield against the temptations to seek after created things to give you lasting joy. Joy in the Lord is the vaccine against the disease of materialism. It's a shield.

The two competing religions that are both offering joy. Materialism offers joy through created things. Christianity offers joy in the Creator. It's not that created things can't give you joy – they can and they do – but not lasting. You will always need more and more and that will only lead to more sorrow. But that is what worldliness is > doubling down again and again on more created things.

Materialism offers joy through consumerism, economics, satisfying your insatiable appetite for joy through buying, purchasing, using, swallowing, acquiring.

I remember walking into a store at Christmas Time and seeing these signs hanging from the ceiling shaped like Christmas ornaments – JOY can be yours through purchasing this item... Joy founded upon Christ's Incarnation!

Materialism has roots and wings that lead to some pretty icky stuff – “drink offerings of blood” of pride in what I have acquired through the sacrifices I have made and given. Drink offerings of blood refers to the death of something living in order to acquire something for myself. I think one application of this is to consider the sacrifices you might be willing to make in order to acquire more possessions. Your possessions could end up possessing you. The choices we make are religious choices – who am I seeking to bring glory to with this choice?

David knows this, so he uses this big shield of joy in the Lord to defend against this temptation to worship other gods.

So you've had some disruption to your pre-March 2020 life. Maybe some things are being taken away that give you a sense of normalcy, ease, comfort, and stability. Where is your soul's anchor? Where does your soul find rest? I know you know the right answer, but when all this war is bombarding us, our real refuge is being exposed.

v. 6 The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places – this might be a matter of perspective for you – to help you see that the boundary lines of your life – what God has chosen to give and chosen to withhold are pleasant for you. That your life is not your own but has been bought with the price of the precious blood of Jesus. This is armor against comparison – one of the chief robbers of joy.

And so you need not only a shield, but a weapon...

## **2Joy in the Lord is a Weapon (v. 3, 7)**

We might need some bigger guns.

I go to the Lord and I go to God's people.

take up the weapon together – with the saints –  
ILLUS of people coming by the church office just to talk

One another > worship, shepherding, community. Fight back against isolation.

Seeing you attend worship services, outdoor service, small groups, even as difficult as it is - making it to one more online conference call.

I go to the Lord > personally applying the truths. Wrestled out. – counsel – and in the night when I am trying to go to sleep I glory in the Lord, I remind myself of the joy that I have in Him, with Him, because of Him. So that your faith matters to you.

The opposite of escapism and self-medication with idolatrous false gods.

Trans: But you have to pick up the shield, pick up the weapon and use it >

## **3Joy in the Lord is a Choice (v. 2, 5, 8)**

This joy must be apprehended, taken hold of, sought after, pursued. This is what David is modeling for us – v. 2 – I say to the Lord. V. 8 – I have set the Lord always before me – I choose to look through my circumstances and see the Lord as dominant, ascendant, primary, preeminent, above it all, the Good Father.

How? Honesty with yourself.

Forgive me for “wanting the gifts of Your hand more than the glory of Your face” (Keller) And repentance from v. 4 false, fleeting joys... so that you loosen your grip on the things of the world and tighten your grip on the delights found only in God. This is verse 5 > V. 5 – my chosen portion – my real wealth.

Using this shield of joy found in the Lord, this weapon of joy in God and in nothing else> this leads to v. 9 – core of the psalm. Heart and flesh rejoice. Spirit and body.

Does not mean that we cannot lament. That we are not to acknowledge the hurt or pretend the suffering is not that bad. Verse 1 is honest, authentic reality that this is bad... I want to escape it. That is invitation to lament. The power for life that being in Christ is.

In Christ, Lament and joy are married. The two become one. The two – lament and joy – are on the same mission: To Glorify God. Jesus – a man of sorrows and full of joy because of living in a fallen world and living as a royal son of the Father. That is you. That is us.

Shield, weapon, a choice,

## **4Joy in the Lord is Near (Right Hand) (v. 8, 11)**

Joy that flows from salvation – right hand –Is 35:10 “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

v. 11 > Joy, then is grounded in God Himself and flows from Him. A fruit of the Spirit. God is love and this love gives joy.

Accessible, available, near, close by. Right there. Nearer than you think.

For some, these days could be part of a pruning, or a purging even, a removal of temporary joys so that they can be replaced with a joy invincible.

How near is this light, but it must be appropriated and taken in all the time!  
Peter quotes Ps 16:8-11 in Acts 2 – Peter’s first sermon –here’s what this psalm is ultimately pointing to > the Resurrection of Christ.

Invitation to tap into the joy of the Resurrection. Jesus is near because He is alive and ascended to the throne of God on High.

The Resurrection of Jesus means that the joy of the Lord is as near as your right hand. Take up the shield of Jesus’ Resurrection: That He took into Himself your guilt and shame and paid the price for it – He suffered and died for you trying to make your life your own.

Take up the weapon of Jesus’ Resurrection > If you are in Christ, then His victory over death is your victory. His victory over temptation is your victory. His endurance of all the world and the deceiver could throw at Him is yours.

**For conc** > ILLUS of no A/C in my truck, 100 degrees, but look at what You have done in my life. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places, indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. I can endure because my joy is not in my circumstances, but in You.

You could write this psalm. This song could be your song. You could grow so that you have this to say to God. That whining, complaining, comparing, jealousy, envy, and discontent become like a distant land in which you once lived and of which you have no more memory of.

Take up the shield, take up the big gun of weaponized joy in the Lord. God gives us these wonderful gifts in order to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever.

1. Share with one another things that come to mind that give you joy. What do you mean when you say, 'I enjoyed that'?
2. If our chief purpose in life is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever, how do you experience the battle for your soul to have joy?
3. How is joy in the Lord armor for you in the fight against materialism? Can you think of a specific story or temptation you overcame by delighting in the Lord in order to say no to a frivolous purchase?
4. How can we help each other differentiate between finding joy in God and finding joy in material things? Is every choice we make really a religious choice?
5. How have you seen your ties to the church and to the Lord increase or decrease during these Covid times? How can we help each other with this?
6. "In Christ, lament and joy are married." How do we maintain both lament over the fallen world we face and living as a royal child of the Father?
7. How does tapping into the Resurrection of Jesus (see verses 8-11 and Acts 2:22-33) help us to apply joy in the Lord to our daily lives? How can this joy overflow out of us and bring hope to others?