

**Motivated by Joy**  
*Joy Over One, Pt. 2*  
*Psalm 96*

Allan McCullough  
*Grace Hill Church*  
*March 17, 2019*



## I. PRAYER

- i. We pray that you would continue to increase our joy in you to the point where we cannot help but share with others the good news of the Gospel.

## II. INTRODUCTION

### a. I am not sure if you were aware of this or not, but this past Wednesday, March 13, 2019 was a tough day for a lot of people.

- It will soon be a day that is forgotten because last Wednesday, both Facebook and Instagram went down for the day and it was not possible to post or share anything online!
  1. You can imagine the hysteria.
- i. And because people's main outlet for sharing their lives was down, most people took to the only remaining social media platform available to join the hysteria...and that was Twitter.
  - Listen to some of these tweets from people who were despairing over having a day without Facebook and Instagram...
    1. "Thoughts and prayers for all the toddlers whose March 13, 2019 will be a blank in their meticulously recorded life."
    2. "I ATE TWO MEALS, INSTAGRAM, AND I WAS NOT ABLE TO POST THEM. MY FANS ARE GOING TO THINK I AM STARVING."
    3. "So, this is what it feels like when Instagram and Facebook give themselves up for Lent..."



4. “Oh man. There’s gonna be soooooooo many babies born in nine months.  
#InstagramBlackout2019”

ii. **It’s fascinating how social media has changed our culture where everything we do now, we feel this compulsion to share it.**

- As I was preparing this sermon, I scrolled through the photos on my phone...
  1. Seven times since the beginning of 2019 (2.5 months) I have taken my phone out and taken a picture of the food I was eating!
  2. Seven times!
  3. When would you have ever done that just 10 years ago?!?
- As many of you know, my wife and I are foster parents and we have a little girl live with us last year for 6 months.
  1. Well, last Saturday we got to babysit her for several hours.
  2. And during that time, my wife took over 50 videos and photos of her.
- If we are a part of anything that is funny, significant, cute, or whatever it is...we now have this automatic reaction to reach into our pockets and pull out the camera.

iii. **Now, this would obviously be an interesting study on how internet and phone addiction is influencing our culture...no doubt.**

- We do have a problem with knowing how to be present with people and how to enjoy the moment.



- But this is not all bad.
  1. Because I do think there is a correlation between how God created us and how popular and all-consuming social media has become.

**b. Every single human being is wired to pursue joy and to share what gives them joy.**

- i. I believe God intentionally created us in this way.
  - He wants us as his creation to be joyful people and that joy only multiplies when we can share it with others.
  - And so social media at its best, cameras on our phone, at their best...just gives us an easier and more robust platform to share with others what gives us joy.
- ii. **We are wired to share with others what gives us joy.**
  - If you see an incredible movie...you naturally share that with your friends, your co-workers, your family members...
    1. Man, you have to go see this movie...it was incredible!
  - Or if the sports team you follow has a dramatic win...
  - Or your child does something amazing...
  - Or if you accomplish something at work..
  - Or if you see something that made you laugh...
  - We have this natural desire to share that with others...



**c. And this universal human behavior is incredibly important to the sermon series that we started last Sunday called “Joy Over One.”**

- i. Last week we talked about how there is more joy in heaven over just one sinner who repents than 99 righteous persons who need no repentance.
  - And I said that I am not content with being a church that does not have the opportunity to celebrate *often* along with heaven because we’re not seeing people surrender their lives to Christ here.
    1. And Jesus is not content with that either because he tells us that half of what it means to follow Jesus is to be engaged in the work of making disciples of Christ and spreading the good news of the gospel.
    2. Speaking the gospel with our mouths to those who do not know Christ.
- ii. **But often times what can happen when we begin to have this conversation about Jesus’ call on us to be missionaries in this world and share the gospel...the call on us to evangelism...**
  - ...is we can begin to feel this pressure to do something that we don’t want to do.
    1. We feel guilt because we know a good Christian ought to share the gospel...but we’re too scared.
    2. We can feel shame because we don’t think we’re the Christian we ought to be...



3. We can feel intimidated because we're afraid of offending someone or being challenged and not knowing how to give an answer...or we're just afraid to have an awkward encounter with someone.
  4. Nobody likes awkwardness.
  5. But maybe our biggest hang up, when it comes to sharing our faith, is it really forces us to ask ourselves the question – “Do I really believe this to the point that I would be a spokesman for it?”
- iii. **But the Bible's vision when it comes to personal evangelism...sharing the message of the gospel with our mouths...is not one of fear, awkwardness, and being motivated by religious guilt.**
- The Bible's vision of personal evangelism is one where in the overflow of the joy that we have found in being reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, we naturally proclaim, we herald, we can't help but share the good news of what Jesus has done for us with the people around us.
    1. Because we have been created to pursue joy and we naturally share that joy with others.

**d. And so, this morning, I want us to spend some time reading Psalm 96 together because we are going to see this in Psalm 96.**

- i. That the proclamation and the sharing of the good news of the gospel is a natural response to the joy that we have received in the gospel.



## ii. Read Psalm 96:1-3

- Now, as we read Psalm 96 together this morning, I have four points that I want you to take away.

### III. POINT #1 (FROM V.1-3) - EVANGELISM FUELED BY AUTHENTIC JOY IS NOT WEIRD.

a. In our Psalm this morning, you can see how the verses flow from a call to worship God to a call to tell of what God has done to all the earth.

i. And these are commands in the Psalm that are assuming that the reader is experiencing the same joy as the Psalmist in God...and as the Psalmist exhorts the reader to sing and to proclaim the works of God...that the reader would agree and respond in such a way.

- Praise God! Sing to God! Tell everyone of what God has done!
- This is an authentic joy followed by an authentic response of sharing with others what gives us joy.
  1. It's a very human thing to do.

b. We live in a culture that is more and more post-Christian...

i. Meaning, it's no longer safe to assume that your neighbors are familiar with Christianity or are friendly with Christianity.

- It used to be that most people in our culture identified as a Christian.



- But, now we are increasingly seeing that more and more people are identifying themselves as what we call “nones.”
  1. Meaning when they take a survey and are asked what religion they are affiliated with, they check the “None” box.
  2. Doesn’t necessarily mean they’re atheists...but it does mean that they do not identify themselves as having to do anything with Christianity or any other religion.
- ii. **And one of the reasons that we are seeing this cultural-religious shift in our country is because we’ve seen a shift in generational values.**
  - Older generations that grew up along with the Cold War and had parents and grandparents that experienced the Great Depression and World War II have largely valued stability, security, values, and hard work.
    1. And this contributed to a more acceptance of religion.
  - But younger generations growing up today who have enjoyed peace and prosperity for so long seem to value life experience and authenticity more.
    1. And one of the things that we’re seeing, is not a decline of convictional Christianity.
    2. But we’re seeing a decline of cultural Christianity.
    3. Since we value authenticity, we are not going to affiliate ourselves with a belief system that we do not authentically believe in.



### iii. Here's why this is important...

- Evangelism fueled by authentic joy is not weird.
  1. People might think what you believe is weird.
  2. People might think your lifestyle is weird.
  3. But if your motivation to share the gospel comes from an authentic place of joy...the fact that you would share that is not weird in this culture.
  4. Because this culture values authenticity and it is very normal for someone to share with others what gives them true joy.
- I really believe that most of the time, when we are reluctant to share our joy in the gospel with someone, we are the ones who feel awkward while the people we are sharing with don't feel awkward at all...
  1. We are the ones who are assuming that this person will not listen to us or does not want us to share.

### iv. But, there is a deeper reason why evangelism fueled by authentic joy is not weird...

## **IV. POINT #2 - AUTHENTIC JOY IN THE GOSPEL WILL PRODUCE COMPASSION FOR THE LOST.**

### **a. Read Psalm 96:4-9**

- i. Here in Psalm 96, there is a reason given in the Psalm as to why we should give praise to God and why we should tell everyone about Him.



- And that reason is because He is the God of salvation and all the other gods are worthless.
- ii. The Psalmist mentions other gods here. But the Psalmist isn't some polytheist who is saying that our God is better than the other gods.
  - No, what the Psalmist is saying is that whatever it is that the world is worshiping is no god at all...in fact it is nothing but a worthless idol.

**b. One thing you need to understand is that we all worship something...in fact, we all probably worship many things.**

- i. Here is how I like to explain what it means to worship something.
  - To worship something is to put your hope in something.
    1. Think about it...let's pretend we were an ancient civilization that actually worshiped what we typically think of when we think of an idol...a little statue sitting on our shelf.
    2. And we would bow to this statue, maybe recite some type of phrase, and pray to this statue that it would send rain for the crops like many ancient civilizations would do.
    3. What are we doing? We are putting our hope in this statue, this idol, that it would provide for us in some way.
    4. That's worship.



- ii. And if this is a good way to define worship...than this means that all of us worship many things because we put our hope in many things.
- It's easy to put our hope in money.
    1. And when we put our hope in money, money becomes the object of our worship.
    2. Meaning we think about it more than anything else, we are willing to make sacrifices for it, we are willing to compromise our integrity for it, we're willing be absent from our spouse and kids for it, we day dream about having more of it.
    3. It's worship.
  - Think about it....that's the kind of place God wants to have in our lives.
    1. He wants to be the one we hope in. The one we sacrifice things for. The one we dream about. The one that consumes our minds and our time. The one that we're willing to value over our closest relationships...
  - It's easy to put our hope in a romantic relationship.
    1. We'll drop everything for it. Sacrifice for it. Our minds will be consumed by it.
  - It's easy to put our hope in a diet or exercise program.
    1. We dream of the good life we'll have once we lose the weight or get healthier, we reads books on it, obsess on the internet over it, spend a ton of money for it...
  - You get the point...it's all worship.



- iii. And the Bible tells us that what happened at the fall when sin entered the world...that we all stopped worshipping God and we began to worship the things that God created.
- Romans 1:25 - *"...they exchanged the truth about God for a lie..."*
    1. The truth that God is the one who we were created to put our hope in. God is the one who gives us joy.
    2. But we exchanged that for a lie...
  - *"...and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator..."*
- iv. So, let's **read Psalm 96:4-5** again.
- Everything that we put our hope in, everything that our neighbors are putting their hope in, is worthless.
    1. They're insufficient. Not able to deliver what they are promising.
    2. Another way to put it...everyone who worships these idols...these other gods...have been duped.
    3. In the same way that we would scoff at someone for worshipping a piece of carved wood...because we know its worthless...and the Bible says the same thing about anything we worship outside of him.
    4. It's a worthless idol.
    5. We hope that this idol will give us lasting joy and purpose...and it has no ability to do it...they're impotent.



**c. And the reason authentic joy in the gospel will produce compassion for the lost is because we have tasted the bitterness of these idols in comparison to the one true God.**

- i. We know these idols will never deliver what they promise...
  - That the more we pursue them, the more they lure us into brokenness.
- ii. And we know that only in Christ can we be forgiven of our idolatry and only in Christ can we discover who God created us to be and the purpose that he has for us in this life.
  - Only in Christ, can our eyes be opened to the truth...
    1. ...and we begin to see those around us who don't know Christ...
    2. ...and we begin to see all that they're putting their hope in...
    3. ...and we don't judge them for it...we've been there...we drift back there...
    4. ...but we now know that those things that they are chasing...those things they are putting their hope in...are worthless....
    5. ...and compassion floods our hearts and the only way we know how to act on that compassion is by sharing with them the one person whom we can put our hope in, and he will never fail us...that's Jesus.



- iii. And listen, as we said before, it's not weird if our evangelism is fueled by authentic joy...and one of the reasons for that is because authentic joy in Christ will produce compassion, not judgement, for the lost.
  - And people know when we are sharing out of compassion or if we have a different agenda attached.
    1. And that leads to point #3.

## **V. POINT #3 – EVANGELISM FUELED BY RELIGIOUS GUILT IS WEIRD.**

### **a. Read Psalm 96:10-13**

- i. See, in these last verses of the Psalm, the author gives us an even greater reason to have compassion on the lost and to have urgency behind telling everyone of His salvation.
  - Because there is going to be a day of judgement.
    1. Everyone will stand before God and God will judge everyone with equity.
    2. He will not be moved.
    3. This will not change.
    4. This is a reality for each and every person.
  - And for the one who is reconciled to God through Christ and worships God as he commands...this will be a glorious, good day.
    1. But for those who does not know Christ and continues to worship worthless idols...this will be a terrible day.



ii. And so the Psalmist says...

- Read v.2b, 3, 7, 10

- And finally, he gives a vision in v.11a.

**b. See, the clear motivation behind the call in Psalm 96 to tell everyone about the Salvation of God...is the glory of God and the fate of the one we're sharing with.**

- i. But when I share the gospel with people out of religious guilt (meaning my true agenda for sharing with people is so people will think favorably of me in the church or to earn the acceptance of God)...my motivation has nothing to do with the glory of God or the fate of the one I'm sharing with...my motivation has everything to do with me...my glory...my fate!
- And people can sniff that out a mile away.
    1. It's weird. It's disingenuous.
    2. It doesn't feel like you really believe what you're sharing.
    3. It's a worthless idol.
  - And the Bible not once gives us a vision of sharing the glory of God and the good news of Jesus Christ out of some petty religious test of fortitude.
    1. The Bible assumes that our evangelism is springing forth from an overflowing well of joy and compassion.



c. And I know some of you are thinking...ALLAN! AMEN BROTHER! I COMPLETELY AGREE WITH YOU! WE SHOULD NOT BE SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH PEOPLE UNLESS OUR HEART IS REALLY IN IT!

- i. This is why I struggle with sharing my faith and why I don't think I should be focused on this right now...because I don't have that overflowing joy...my heart isn't fully in it...and I need to spend time working that before I share my faith with other people.
  - Because if my heart isn't really in it...people will see through me...and it won't be honoring to God.
- ii. Well, this is why we need Point #4.

## **VI. POINT #4 - OBEDIENCE POSTURES THE HEART FOR JOY.**

a. In Psalm 96, we are commanded to worship God and to tell of His salvation.

- i. And there are times when our hearts are not in it...and during those times...our obedience can posture our heart to be all in.
  - Our obedience can put our hearts in a place where it begins to overflow in authentic joy.
  - Our obedience is actually how we cultivate and grow this joy in our heart.



**b. Wait, but Allan, didn't you just say that we shouldn't share our faith unless our heart is in it ...that it's weird if we do that!?**

- i. No, that's not what I said...
- What I said was sharing your faith out of religious guilt is weird because religious guilt has nothing to do with the glory of God or the fate of the one your sharing with, it has everything to do with you.
- ii. **Obedience is not religious guilt.**
- Obedience is saying...
    1. God, I believe your good...
    2. I believe you are to be worshiped by all the earth...
    3. I believe this person needs the gospel...
    4. But right now, my heart is afraid to share, right now I'm anxious, right now I'm tempted to give in to the worthless idol of comfort than to trust the God of Salvation...right now, my heart is just selfish...
    5. And, so, I'm going to step out in obedience.
  - Brothers and sisters, you better believe that this kind of obedience to God, even when our hearts are not all the way in it, gives God glory and is putting the person your sharing with above yourself.
    1. And that's not weird.
    2. And that will posture your heart for unbelievable joy.



3. I believe that one of the reasons we don't experience this kind of overflowing joy in our lives is because we don't step out in obedience in this area of our faith and posture our hearts for the joy that Psalm 96 speaks of.
4. The kind of joy where we can't help but share.

**c. Obedience postures the heart for joy. And this is why for the remainder of our “Joy Over One” series that we are doing between now and Easter, I want to call on everyone who calls Grace Hill their church home to step out in obedience and posture your heart for joy.**

- i. I want you to be proactive about cultivating this kind of overflowing joy in your heart that will translate into a life of sharing with others.
- ii. And so, I am calling on everyone in this church to pick one person.
  - One person who lives here locally that is in your life does not know Jesus.
    1. Could be a neighbor, co-worker, classmate, friend...
  - There is more joy in heaven over one person who repents than over 99 persons who need no repentance.
    1. And, so, I want you to pick one.
    2. And I want you to commit to three things. (1) Pray for that person every single day, (2) Invite them to come with you to church, and (3) Share the gospel with them at some point this year.



- iii. And the best thing that you can do today is spend time praying and asking God who He would like for you to begin to focus on.
- Ask Him to lead you to the right person.
  - And then commit to praying daily for that person.
    1. Praying that God would soften their heart.
    2. Praying that God would give you compassion.
    3. Praying that God would give you opportunities to share.
  - And so, to help you pray for your one, we have another resource for you.
    1. This is a 30-Day Prayer Guide.
    2. It's very simple. It contains a Scripture, a prayer for you to pray for your one person every single day, and space for you to journal if you would like.
    3. If you're feeling intimidated by this challenge, please at least commit to picking on person and praying for them daily for 30 days.
  - In Community Groups, we're going to talk about who's your one.
    1. We're going to continue to preach on this over the next several weeks.
    2. I don't want this to be a nice sermon application for today that we forget tomorrow.
    3. So, start praying and asking God...who is my one person?



- iv. Just imagine with me what God would do, if every single one of us, picked just one person, prayed for them 30 days in a row, invited them to church, and shared the gospel with them.
- I think you'll be amazed at how this will posture your heart for joy and begin to establish a life of joyful sharing of the gospel.

## VII. PRAY

