

**Psalm 16: 7-11; “My Heart is Glad and Rejoices”, An Easter Sunday Sermon
prepared by Pastor Paul Rendall and Delivered on April 4th, 2021,
in the Morning Worship Service.**

The glorious truth that we celebrate this Easter Sunday morning is that since Christ’s flesh rested in the grave in the sure hope of His resurrection, we too can look forward to a glorious resurrection in the future, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again for us. We see in these verses, the reasons that Christ’s heart was glad in looking forward to His resurrection. They are the same reasons that you and I, if we believe in Him can be glad when we think of our own future, and the resurrection of the dead. Let me give you three questions to consider at this time which I think will help you to know Christ’s heart better; and why He could be glad, even though He was going to be crucified, die at the hands of wicked men, and be buried. What was He looking forward to? And what was it that made His heart glad?

1st of all – Let’s ask this question: Why did Christ bless the Lord who counseled Him? (verse 7)

“I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the night seasons.” This counsel which is being spoken of here by the Lord Jesus, was given by the Father in heaven to Him, while He walked upon the earth. There is no doubt of this; Christ’s Father was giving Him help as a Man by the Holy Spirit, in keeping all of His Father God’s commandments. The Holy Spirit was giving Him wisdom in everything pertaining to His earthly ministry. This included the miracles that He performed and when to perform them; what He should do as follow-up with the people that He healed, and cast out demons from them. It also included the what and how of what He should say, in relation to all of His teaching and preaching. The Father and the Spirit also gave Him wisdom in how to go about handling His spiritual enemies among the scribes, the Pharisees, and the leaders of Israel.

In praying about these things, and having sweet fellowship and communion with His Father, the Lord Jesus says here that His Father and the Holy Spirit even instructed Him in the night seasons.” You should understand that in His own heart, the Holy Spirit dwelt without measure, and in His Divine nature in which there was a mutual indwelling of the Persons of the Godhead, these things were very real to the Lord Jesus. The counsel of the Father to the Son was something which began in eternity past, it continued after the Son became incarnate, and it will continue until Christ comes back again. The Lord Jesus has always, from eternity past “blessed the Lord for His counsel”, and during that time of His earthly ministry, ‘His heart was instructing Him in the night seasons”.

I think that we need to see this truth better, so turn with me to Proverbs Chapter 8, verse 22. This chapter speaks of the personification of wisdom as a “she” in this chapter and in Chapter 9, verses 1-6. And it can be taken in that way to refer to the Church, the Bride of Christ in both Old Testament and New, who preaches and teaches the whole counsel of God; who cries out by the gates and at the entry of the city, and at the doors of men’s hearts.” (Proverbs 8: 3) She is the one who preaches the gospel of Christ; the Christ in whom are hidden “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”, as it says in Colossians 2: 3.

Listen now to these words which perfectly describe the Father and the Son, and the counsel given and received during that time of the creation of the world and in eternity beforehand: Proverbs 8, verses 27-31 – “When He prepared the heavens, I was there.” “When He drew a circle on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep, when He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in His inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men.”

We see here that the pre-incarnate Son of God was there at the creation with His Father, beside Him it, says, as a “wise master craftsman”. In other words, the Father counseled the Son as to what His eternal purposes were; in terms of the creation of the world and the creation of man in His own image and likeness; that He might have a people for His own possession. The Father made all things for Him and through Him, as He was the Essential Word of God. The Father spoke all created things into existence in relation to His Son. He was delighted in by His Father, in all of the 6 literal days of the creation. He had already been rejoicing from all eternity in the Father’s purposes in creation and redemption.

He rejoiced in the more specific sense of what He knew that the Father had willed for Him to do and to accomplish in relation to “the sons of men”. He blessed the Lord for this counsel. And what the Father had purposed, was that His Son would be sent into the world, in the fullness of time; assume human nature in the incarnation, and then He would perfectly fulfill all of His Father’s righteous demands in relation to His law and justice. This would be absolutely necessary because together, the Father and the Son foresaw, they most definitely knew and ordained it, that the first man Adam and the first woman Eve, would not be able to keep the one command given to Adam when he was created him and placed him in the garden. Even though he and Eve had free will, and a heart inclined to do what was right and good, yet they did not hold fast God’s good word to them, and together they fell, being deceived by the Devil.

This contingency was provided for in the counsel given by the Father to the Son in eternity past, and then it was practically worked out in the Incarnation and life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Father knew that it was absolutely necessary that all things be summed up in His Son, and that all people descended from Adam would need a Savior. He would pass all of the tests related to overcoming the schemes of the Evil One, and the temptations that would come to His mind and heart. Here in Psalm 16, in verses 2 and 3, the Lord Jesus says prophetically of His own earthly ministry – “O my soul, you have said to the Lord, You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You.” “As for the saints who are on the earth, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight.”

I hope that you see that these verses take nothing away from Christ’s Deity. They pertain to Christ’s considering Himself as a Man before the Father. But they also take in His being a Man among men. His goodness as a Man would be nothing apart from God. At one point He said, not as denying His Deity, but speaking as one man with another – No one is good, but God alone. But let us remember, that in Christ, His Deity was joined with the humanity in one blessed and perfectly good Person. As God He had always been eternally and essentially good. As a Man, He went about doing good to everyone around Him.

And the reason that He did that was because of His great love for sinners, to see them become saints. And when they became saints by faith in Him, all of His delight was found in them. For He had everything spiritually good to give them, and to each one of us here today who will believe in Him. In Christ, during the time of His earthly ministry, He was always of a most excellent spirit. And to this excellent human spirit, was joined the fullness of the Holy Spirit, as it is described for us in Isaiah 11: 2, where it says – “The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.”

And so, it was the case, that Christ’s heart instructed Him on many occasions in the night seasons; times when He would spend the whole night in prayer. He did so before He chose His 12 Apostles. And in Luke 21: 37 it says that “He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet,” where He often prayed. But what great counsel our Lord Jesus received that night in prayer; the night on which He was betrayed. His heart and His mind were instructing Him then, because He had set His Father holy expectations in His will, always before Him. In Matthew 27: 38, He said to His disciples, “My soul is exceedingly

sorrowful, even to death.” “Stay here and watch with Me.” “He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed saying, ‘O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.’” And so, at that most difficult time, our Lord’s Father instructed His mind and heart. He made it plain to Him that it was not His will to let the cup pass. And indeed, Christ received this counsel because He knew that His sufferings would be for our salvation.

He blessed the Lord because He knew that He was able to lovingly and faithfully fulfill this counsel, and suffer and die so that your sins could be forgiven. He blessed the Lord because He knew that in fulfilling the law and laying down His life, He would also take it up again in His resurrection. And then, when you believed in Him, He knew that your heart would be instructing you, because you as a Christian now have a New Heart by grace, and the Holy Spirit working in your heart to lead you and guide you into all the truth of what pleases God. Yes, in the night seasons, in the times when you are praying, and when the hour of temptation is near, you will be able to bless the Lord who has counseled you with the gospel, and counseled you with His word. Oh, that you might bless the Lord even now! For He is the One who takes away all of your sins, makes your heart glad in the greatest and most difficult of trials when you follow Him.

2nd – This leads me to ask – Why was Christ glad to be living and dying on your behalf? (verses 8 and 9)

“I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.” “Therefore, my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope.” This is a very great truth to consider – It was because the Lord Jesus set the Father always before Him, that the Spirit of the Lord rested upon Him all during that time of His earthly ministry and His sufferings unto death. Because He did this, He could therefore look forward to His victory on our behalf, to bring us salvation. His heart was glad at the thought, and His glory could rejoice. The Apostle Peter interprets the words “His glory” to refer to the tongue of Christ. Peter says in his sermon concerning Christ, to those gathered to hear him on the day of Pentecost, He says concerning the Lord Jesus in Acts 2: 26 – “Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad.”

This joy of Christ’s heart concerning what God would do for Him, in raising Him from the dead, He would speak about this afterwards. He said to John in giving him the great vision on the Isle of Patmos in Revelation 1: 18 – “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore.” This implies that because there had been a conscious and deliberate “setting of the Lord before Him” by faith, when He went to the cross, that now He was risen from the dead, He now had this great joy in thinking about what He had accomplished by His righteous life, and His dying for us on the cross. He had real and great joy in anticipating His victory over sin and death on our behalf before the cross. But now that that work is finished and complete and He is raised from the dead, He has great joy in giving you all that you need to live the Christian life.

Because of His resurrection, He is now living in your life by faith. That same joy that He had in anticipation of His victory can also be your joy in living the Christian life to His glory, and anticipating your spiritual victories in laying aside sin, and running your race with endurance. Hebrews 12: 1 and 2 – Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

So let us learn then, dear brethren learn to receive this blessed truth, and the power that accompanies it, to those who believe. You will over time, become more like Jesus, as you think more about His joy; the joy that He had in living and dying on your behalf. And the joy that He has in giving you all the spiritual blessings from His exalted position at the right hand of the

Father. Let us have His joy in ourselves. How can this come about in your life? Well, you must remember that even as the Lord Jesus looked forward and contemplated His sufferings on the cross, He was considering you, and then out of His great love to God and to you, the sinner, He came to see the doing of God's will as His spiritual food. That is, He had such communion with the Father, in all the decisions that He made concerning how to do God's will to His glory, that it caused Him to pray fervently about how He could speak that truth to lost sinners, and give them life. He sought to partake of spiritual things which would fortify His soul to become the best of witnesses to lost sinners like you and me. Let me give you an example of this. Let me show you what made Jesus' heart glad and His glory rejoice.

You will remember that in John chapter 4, that Jesus and His disciples came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, and Jacob's well was there. And Jesus was weary and thirsty. And His disciples went into the city to buy food. And a woman from Samaria came to the well to draw water. And Jesus said to her – "Give me a drink." And she said – "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" And this was because the Jews did not have dealings with Samaritans in that day. They believed different things about God's word and God's worship. And Jesus said to her – "If you knew the gift of God and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.'"

Jesus never did get this woman to give Him any water, so far as I can see from the text there. This was because she was so busy trying to ask Jesus questions about this living water, and trying to understand how He could know that she was a sinful woman who had had five husbands, and that the one she presently had was not her husband, that she forgot entirely to give Him a drink. In fact, the very opposite took place. Jesus actually gave her a drink, spiritually speaking. She ended up asking Him to give her the living water so that she would never thirst again; the water which would spring up in her heart to everlasting life. And so, when Jesus told her that she had had 5 husbands and that the one that she had now was not her husband, she said to Him – "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."

She tried to shift the conversation to comparing her Samaritan religion with the religion of the Jews. "Our father worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." But Jesus told her that an hour was coming when she would neither worship the Father on that mountain or in Jerusalem. He told her salvation was of the Jews; that she and her people did not know what they worshipped, but that a time was coming when the true worshippers would worship the Father in spirit and truth; that that was the kind of worshiper that the Father was seeking to worship Him. She says to Him – I know that the Messiah is coming (who is called Christ). And when He comes, He will tell us all things." And Jesus said to her – "I who speak to you am He."

I am saying that it was this kind of conversation which gave the Lord Jesus great joy; it made His heart glad. His glory was rejoicing. Well, at this point, Jesus' disciples returned with the food. They marveled that He was speaking with a woman, but no one questioned Him about it. The woman left her waterpot, and she went into the city, and she said to the men there – "Come and see a Man who told me all things that I ever did." "Could this be the Christ?" And they come out of the city to see and to talk with Christ. In the meantime, the disciples say to Jesus – "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them – I have food to eat of which you do not know." And the disciples said to one another – "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" And Jesus said – "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

So you see, it was Christ's great love for sinners, like this woman at the well, that made His heart glad. His highest joy was in preaching the gospel to sinners, knowing that this is why He was living, and knowing that this is why He would end up going to the cross. Let's apply this a little further. Look with me over Matthew chapter 28, verses 1-10. Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the

tomb.” “And behold there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord had descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.” “The angel’s countenance was like lightening, and his clothing as white as snow.” “And the guards shook for fear of Him, and became like dead men.” “But the angel answered and said to the women – ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.’ “He is not here; for He is risen, as He said.” “Come and see the place where the Lord lay.” “And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him.” “Behold, I have told you.”

“So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.” You see, Christ heart was glad, and His glory was rejoicing, as He sent word to these women of His resurrection by the words of this angel. His flesh had rested in hope in the tomb those three days and three nights. But now He wanted them to rejoice, and they did. They had not seen Him yet, but still they could rejoice with godly fear. O my brethren, we have not seen Him face to face, risen from the dead and glorified yet. But someday we shall. And should our joy wait until that blessed day? No it should commence now, and continue until we see Him face to face. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice!

3rd – How could Christ be glad while His body lay in the tomb?

It is because He knew, before He ever went to the cross, that He would rise again on the third day. Verses 10 and 11 say – “For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.” “You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” We have seen now how the the Lord Jesus had joy and gladness in the anticipation of His resurrection, and this is what sustained Him during the time of His sufferings and crucifixion. His soul would not remain in the abode of the dead any longer than Sunday morning. He knew this; He knew that the Father would raise Him from the dead and show Him, as a Man, the path to eternal life. He would lead the way for all of His people.

And so, His flesh would rest in hope, in the grave, in those 3 days and 3 nights. And even during that time, His heart and soul would be glad. Will you not thank God that the same can be true of you, as a believer in Him? You need not fear death now that you have Jesus as your life. You need not fear your body being placed in the grave, or your soul being in a place of torment when you die. For Jesus has opened heaven’s gate for you. He has gone to prepare a place for you so that He can receive you to Himself. The moment you die, your soul is transported to the very presence of Your Savior, and the Father, and the spirits of the saints from every generation. And He will come to raise your body from the dead some day when He returns. Colossians chapter 3 and verse 4 says – “When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

In the meantime, what should you do, while you still live here upon the earth? You should believe in His promise that you find in verse 11 of our text – “He will show you the path of life”. At God’s right hand, there are pleasures forevermore. But, as I have been saying to you, Christ is risen from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father. The source of all of our true and lasting pleasures is there. He has given us His Holy Spirit. He has been sent into your heart crying, “Abba, Father”. He is with His Church always, even to the end of the age. All things are yours in Christ. Remember you are presently on the path to heaven. You are a sojourner in this life. You are a pilgrim traveling to the Celestial City, even as Christian in Pilgrim’s Progress.

He was being shown the path to eternal life, and so also are you. The Lord has placed you on the path of righteousness, and He is leading you on it, for His name’s sake. In this life, if you are faithful to walk on this path, you will come to Beulah Land, as Bunyan describes what took place for Christian and Hopeful. It is the place of greater faith, and greater assurance of the things hoped for. He says – “Now I saw in my dream that by this time the pilgrims had gotten over the

Enchanted Ground and had entered the country of Beulah, whose air was very sweet and pleasant: the way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season.” “Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds and saw every day the flowers appearing on the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle-dove in the land.” “In this country the sun shineth night and day; wherefore this was beyond the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and also out of the reach of Giant Despair; neither could they from this pace so much as see Doubting Castle.”

“Here they were within sight of the City they were going to; also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for in this land the Shining Ones (angels) commonly walked, because it was upon the border of heaven.” “In this land also the contract between the Bride and the Bridegroom was renewed; yea, here, ‘as the Bridegroom rejoiceth over His Bride, so did their God rejoice over them.’” “Here they had no want of corn or wine; for in this place they met with abundance of what they sought for in all their pilgrimage.” “Here they heard voices from out of the City – loud voices – saying, ‘Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your Savior comes!’” “See, his reward is with him.” “Here all the inhabitants of the country call them ‘The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord; and you will be called Sought After.’”

“Now as they walked in this land, they rejoiced more than they had when they traveled in other parts of the kingdom which were further away; as they approached the City, they got a better view of it.” “It was built of pearls and precious stones.” “The street was paved with gold.” “And because of the natural glory of the City, and the reflection of the sunbeams on it, Christian, longing to be there, became sick. Hopeful also got a little of the same disease – homesickness. Therefore, they rested by the City for a while, crying out, “If you see my Beloved, tell him that I am love-sick.” Beloved, this is the worst of it, for the experienced traveler. Being love-sick for heaven and for meeting your beloved, and being able to worship Him there in the glories of heaven. But even in this, your heart can be glad, and your glory rejoice, as you look forward to eternal glory, and the pleasures at Christ’s right hand.