

THE REC ROOM

(My Heart, Christ's Home; Message Eight)
Colossians 3:23-24

A. Robert Munger notes that he's not comfortable sharing his Rec Room (leisure time) with Jesus

1. Maybe he never associated Jesus with fun, recreation and pleasure
2. Maybe he's not comfortable with Jesus knowing what he does there

B. Jesus: *"I thought when I came into your home we were going to do everything together"*

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11)

THE PROBLEM

A. We tend to separate our recreation, pleasure and leisure from God

1. We prefer to hide our inappropriate behaviors, relationships and activities
2. We compartmentalize our lives and relegate God out of certain rooms...

We concentrate on the pleasure of an event and we ignore the smell of deity that hangs in it. (C.S. Lewis)

B. We miss the connection between the joys of life and the God who made them

THE PREMISE

A. Premise: Joy is one of the most powerful connectors to the presence of God

1. There are lots of ways we will learn about the nature and presence of God
2. There are lots of ways we miss the amazing goodness of God

B. Premise: we vastly underestimate the power of joy

"These people come near to Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship of Me is made up only of rules..." (Isaiah 29:13)

"Once more I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder" (Isaiah 29:14)

"Joy is the surest sign of the presence of God." (Pierre Teilhard De Chardin)

"One of the best proofs for the existence of God is banana cream pie." (Steve Evans)

1. We often fail to recognize evidence for the presence and goodness of God
2. There is no place where—if our eyes and ears are open—we are not over-whelmed by the presence and goodness of God

I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. (Philemon 1:6)

"To know God and enjoy him forever" (Westminster Catechism)

C. Premise: We forget play is an expression of God's presence in the world...

1. Play is a God-given way to release the life-threatening grip of busyness, hurry, stress and anxiety
2. We not only underestimate joy, we underestimate the power of joy
 - a. God was constantly teaching his people about joy

"Nehemiah said, 'Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to the Lord. Do not grieve for the joy of the Lord is your strength. The Levites calmed all the people, saying, 'Be still, for this is a sacred day. Do not grieve.' Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them." (Nehemiah 8:10-12)

- b. Joy is not just a momentary aberration; it is the glimpse of what life with Jesus will be like throughout eternity

THE PRINCIPLE

A. Finally, we need to understand the bedrock issue that underlies all of this

1. The sign a carpenter's work was finished became a (neatly) folded cloth

"So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen." (John 20:3f)

2. Jesus, the carpenter, left his Father and disciples a sign: a folded cloth
3. As only a carpenter could, Jesus says, *"My work is done. It's finished"*

B. That is the foundation of all our joy: The work is done. It is finished.

C. We can experience His joy in a myriad of ways: let me summarize:

1. Joy emanates from God; to know real joy is to know God
2. Joy ushers us into the presence of God. Joy takes us into God's presence—the heart and soul of our worship together
3. Joy transforms us. Joy is our response to who He is
4. Without joy, we have no hope of knowing God

"The house of my soul, O God, is too small for You to come in. May it be enlarged by You." (Augustine)

"...together we celebrate your abundant goodness ..." (Psalm 145:7)

5. May God surprise you with joy and remind you of his presence and goodness