Intro: 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. John 15:11

These words were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is most important for us to notice when He uttered them.  It was a very strange time to talk of joy and gladness, for in a little while He would be in dark Gethsemane, and shortly after that He would be facing His accusers and hearing the taunts and mocking of those who hated Him.  Yes, it was just prior to facing the agonies of Calvary that He spoke of “My joy…”, and it is very significant that, so far as the scripture records are concerned, this is the only time He did speak of His joy.

I. What is this Christian Joy Which We Christians should experience – 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. John 15:11

a. It is Christ’s Joy

• “. . . that My joy may be in you” (John 15:11).  “My joy…in you…”  The Christian life is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ in a man or a woman. Christian joy is Christ’s joy in a Christian, and this means that this deep-down, abiding joy is not found anywhere else except in Him.  There are other kinds of joy found in other places, but His joy is found in Him alone.

° 28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence. Acts 2:28

b. It is Fulness of Joy

• “…that your joy might be full” (John 15:11).  There is a great difference between joy and fulness of joy.  The vessel may be partly filled or completely filled.  Our Lord’s desire for us is that we should experience fulness of joy continually.

° 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. Psalms 16:11

c. It is Abiding Joy

• Our joy is not an irregular experience, but a lasting one. It is a joy which is unaffected by circumstances – see what the Lord said to His disciples in John 16:22. These first followers of our Lord were to pass through many trials and testings, but He told them that nothing could rob them of their joy – His joy in them. Here are some examples of Christian Joy giving to us by the word of God:

1. Our Lord experienced this joy in the shadow of the cross

° 13 But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. John 17:13

2.. Acts 16:25 – Paul and Silas showed great joy which enabled them to sing

° 25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, Acts 16:25

II. So, Joy should be the characteristic of every Christian – 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. John 15:11

a. Christian can be some of the gloomiest people

b. Our Christian Joy should be marked by:

1. Joy in our behavior

° 39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. Acts 8:39

2. Joy in living God’s word

° 16 Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts. Jeremiah 15:16

3. Joy in our prayers

° 24 Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. John 16:24

4. Joy in our suffering

° 41 Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. Acts 5:41

5. Joy in serving others

° 24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith. 2 Corinthians 1:24

III. How can we keep this Joy – 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. John 15:11

a. By keeping Christ in our lives

• We talk about this already, but it bears repeating. We must be in Christ to have His joy. You can find some very happy people. But not one of them will have true joy if they are not in Christ Jesus. That means that you must be born again.

° 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. John 15:11

b. By keeping His Word

• When we read the Bible and receive the truth, we experience great joy – look up 1 John 1:4.  This is akin to having a “burning heart” as the result of fellowship with the Lord as He speaks to us – look up Luke 24:32.

° 10 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. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. John 15:10-11

c. By being submissive to Him

• Notice in Luke 10:21 that we are told two things:  first, that “Jesus was full of joy…”; and second, that He was completely submissive to His Father’s will.  His joy was the joy of complete and continual submission to the will of His Father in Heaven.

° 21 In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. Luke 10:21

d. By Keeping the guidance of the Holy Spirit

• At this very moment the Lord Jesus is exalted, the perfect Man in a perfect human body, in Heaven.  His desire is that His joy should be complete in us.  How can this be, for He is there, and we are here?  He is in Heaven, and we are on earth!  The answer is – by the Holy Spirit

° 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. Acts 13:52

IV. There is a difference between happiness and Joy

a. Happiness comes from human emotions

• The word happy and blessed are interchangeable. Take Mathew chapter five the “be attributes” are a collection of blessed that if you do them, they will keep your emotions on the happy side of life. What Joy deals with what helps you when your emotions fail you, and the will.

° 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. John 13:17

b. Christ Joy is deeper than just a happy person

• True joy can only come from Christ. But it is deep than being happy. This joy no words can fully explain. It is shown when a cancer patient smiles as they take their last breath, or a child has a peace of where their grandparents have gone when they have died. When you talk to Christians with this type of Joy words just can’t quite explain it.

° 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8, 9