

## 2025-07-06 - The Joy of the Lord - Rooted in Sovereign Grace

Elder Ninos Dekelaita

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Joy of the Lord: Rooted in Sovereign Grace</b></p>
--

Good morning, church. How are you? I'm the other youth pastor. So, Sammy and I are going to have a competition after this. I'm Ninos Dekelaita. For those of you that don't know me, I'm one of the elders here. I have the distinct privilege of bringing you the Word of God today. All right. So, what we are talking about today, and I have a clicker, so be careful. You give me a clicker; it's not good.

What we're talking about today is we live in a world where it's duped even us, where we always are trying to seek happiness. In a world that's flawed, damaged, filled with sinners, of which we are as well, we look for happiness to shape our life. And the Scripture, if you went back at the time of the Bible writers and you said to them, "Hey, seek happiness, look for happiness," their worldview was, "Wait, how can I have happiness outside of God?" because their circumstances dictated they were always reliant on something else. You know, it's that old adage: when you have everything taken away, then you really figure out what's important. When you have a lot, you lose your way.

So, before we start, I want to talk to us a little bit about a culture thing. So, here in America, we're going to block out the rest of the world for five minutes. Here in America, we've all grown up with the thought of, "You gotta go, you gotta get, you gotta attain. You've got to have success. Success dictates how happy you are."

Let me ask a trick question: Are you happy? What makes you happy? You would think that, "If I have that bigger house, well, I'll be happy." No, you won't. "If I had a couple more zeros in front of the one in my bank account, I'll be happy." No, you won't. You see how many rich people wind up killing themselves?

Happiness in a biblical worldview that impacts Christians, if you're not careful, sabotages your joy. Because now you're motivated, you're moving, right? Either you're seeking happiness, or you're seeking the Lord, because trouble does come.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer, and then we can kind of start.

*Father, God, we come before you, and I ask as your servant here, do not leave me by myself up here. Speak through me. Speak to your people. Move and guide them the way you see fit. In the powerful name of Jesus Christ our Lord, that we magnify. Amen.*

## I. Joy vs. Happiness: Defined by the Word of God

**Main Point:** Scripture—not culture—defines joy. Biblical joy is Spirit-produced and eternal; happiness is emotion-driven and temporary.

Category	Joy (Biblical)	Happiness (Emotional)
Source	God, by the Spirit	Circumstance, feelings
Duration	Eternal, unshakable	Temporary, fragile
Focus	God-glorifying	Self-centered
Depth	Rooted in redemption	Rooted in comfort
Biblical Use	Joy as fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22)	Rare in modern emotional sense

**Galatians 5:22** – “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy...”

**Challenge:** *Am I letting Scripture shape my view joy, or have I unknowingly adopted the world's shallow version of happiness?*

So, let's go to the thought: Joy versus happiness defined by the Word of God. Scripture, not culture, defines joy. Biblical joy produces eternal happiness, and an emotion not driven by temporary things. In this definition, here in this category breakdown, right—by the way, I feel like a weatherman right here, "You have a cold front coming this way." Sorry, I had to. It was there.

So, you have—this is for your edification—I would recommend that you take a picture of this and ask yourselves, right, "My **happiness**, is it circumstance and feeling? Is it temporary?" Because it is. It's fragile, it's self-centered, rooted in comfort, rare, modern emotional sense, right? And then you have over here the **biblical** view of joy. And why is this important? Because one leads to reverence towards God; the other leads you to isolate from God.

I'll give you an example: when your own sin, do you run to the church? When you're in sin, do you run to prayer? When you're in sin, do you run to a Bible study? No, you do the opposite. When you feed your flesh, the results, the byproduct, is running away. And that's probably—I can't isolate it, right—but that's probably one of the main focuses why you have people struggling to serve in churches, because they're waiting for the happy moment. "When I'm happy, I will serve. When, I'm in a good place, I will serve." Is that the Bible you've read? Is that the Bible I've read? You show me in the Scriptures where the people of God were always abundantly... a certain way, they weren't.

Now, the thought process here is, and the challenge point would be, Am I letting Scripture shape my view of joy, or do I have unknowingly adopted the world's shallow version of happiness? Because in that comparison game, okay, God has blessed you today. You're here. First of all, by His providence, you live in a country, okay, not perfect because it's run by

sinners. Don't expect perfection. But it's superintended by the God of perfection, okay. You live in a country. You can live easily or not been living in this country.

I'll give you a perfect example: My parents came here in 1977, running away, giving up everything they could just to get to a country where they could be identified as Assyrian Christians. That's it. Because back home in Iraq—it was not home for me, home for them—it was, you were a second-class citizen. If they took a census, you weren't in it. So, they fled just to have what we have, and we take for granted the ability to come in on a Sunday and worship the God you love.

Because in the happiness game, you'll always find someone better than you. "Well, that person's wife is so much nicer than my wife." If my wife is listening, I'm not talking about you, my love. I just had to clarify. She's under the weather today, so I just had to clarify that. But, or "That person's kid listens to them so much more than my kids," or "That person has a bigger house," or that person—when does it stop? And I'll tell you why it doesn't stop: because the heart is sinful above all things, as opposed to being content with the lot that the Lord has given you, right, and going to Him.

Now, I don't speak pie-in-the-sky, okay. I'm gonna give you a real example of real life, and I didn't get to this point—and this is not about me, may God get the glory—I didn't get to this point overnight. Years ago, I was part of a group of folks. We started a business, okay, and it was successful, and it was more successful, right? It was about to, let's say, turn the corner to become what we would call wealthy, right. In 2016, the business took a bad turn. It went under. It went so far that it depleted everything I had, to the point where now, right, I went to—and don't judge me, all you healthy eaters—I went to McDonald's. I was getting food for my kids; my credit card didn't work, and I couldn't buy them anything. My kids remember because they were like, "Dad, do you remember the time where you went to McDonald's and you couldn't buy us anything?" See, I remember, I remember. But we've turned that into, "Look what God has done." You could stay there, or you can choose to come out of it.

For me to speak to you about this is because the Lord took me to a place I didn't want to go. And when we're talking about joy, the key function is the Lord will take you to places only to break you, because He knows what's good for His children. Just like a father—I see fathers out here, and praise God for the fathers, and praise God for the mothers—you know what's good for your children. When you see your child exhibit habits that you have, doesn't it irk you? Right, you didn't know you could pass those on. It irks you because you say, "I know the pain this creates; I don't want this for my child." Your Father in heaven is eternal; He has seen billions of lives. He knows how each one of them ends.

So, when He says, "Rejoice in circumstances, don't seek happiness," because happiness is a foreign concept in the Scriptures. It doesn't talk about it. You know who talks about it? Joel Osteen talks about it; false Bible teachers talk about it. There are 400 Christian books written about happiness. So, when I started that, I said, "Are you happy?" The real question is, do you have joy, no matter what you're going through? Because all the lives here are going through something. Amen. Everyone is going through something. Nobody can sit here and say, "You know what? Everything is great." That's not the point.

## **II. Joy Comes from the God's Sovereign work, Not Circumstances**

**Main Point:** Joy is a gift of grace from God, not something we produce or earn.

**Psalms 4:7** – "You have put more joy in my heart..."

**John 15:11** – "That my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

**Galatians 5:22** – Joy is a fruit of the Spirit.

"Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy His forever." – Westminster Shorter Catechism Q.1

**Challenge:** *Am I Depending on feelings or situations to determine my peace? Ask the Lord to root your joy and his character and promises.*

The point of the Scriptures is **joy comes from the sovereign work of God**. The challenge here would be, am I depending on feelings or situations to determine my peace? Think about that question. And I'll leave the Bible verses up there for you guys. Am I dependent when things are good, and somebody walks up to me, "How you doing, brother?" "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord. I put the lottery numbers in, and they came out." Nobody says, "Praise the Lord, my son doesn't listen to me. Praise the Lord, my wife hates me." Are you letting the circumstances that you're going through define your Christian walk? Because, ultimately, church, there is One greater than your circumstance who is allowing you to go through the circumstance so that He can teach you, break you, mold you to conform you to the image of Christ. Because there are things in you that He will change.

And unfortunately, for the young folks here, I say unfortunately, it's only through discipline that we learn. And I back up my story for a second. A couple of years prior to that, I was talking to a guy, and he said to me—what hit me later—he said, "Man, everything you talk about is money-related." You know, there's one of those things you put in your memory banks, where, as the Scripture says, "And Mary treasured these things in her heart" (Luke 2:19). It was one of those moments where you treasure in your heart and said, "Am I completely money-

hungry?" At the time, I said, "No way. I'm a Christian. I follow the Lord. I'm a good person." But that's not how the Lord saw me. And it took Him to get me to a different point.

And I don't know—here's what I don't know—I don't know where you are this morning. But if you have the joy of the Lord in spite of your circumstances, boy, that's infectious. Boy, that's powerful. "Hey, what's wrong with Sally over here?" If there's anyone named Sally, I don't know anything about you. "What's wrong with Sally over here?" "Well, Sally's going through a divorce, but look at how she's rejoicing. Look at how her attitude is. Look at how faithful she is continually in prayer."

### III. Joy is God-Centered, Not Man-Centered

**Main Point:** Joy glorifies God. It's not about self-fulfillment but about delighting in God for who He is.

**1 Peter 1:8-9** – "You are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy..."

**Psalm 37:4** – "Delight yourself in the Lord..."

**Challenge:** *Is my joy based on getting what I want—or seeing and savoring the glory of God? Refocus your heart on him.*

**Joy is God-centered, not man-centered.** And you see the verses, right? "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). The challenge is, is my joy based on getting what I want or seeing the Savior glorified? Think about that question. Let that hit you for a second, and then we come out of it. If I have joy, I bring that joy for the Lord, and He gets the glory in my life. If I'm seeking happiness only, it's for me. If I tell you, okay, example, a silly example, but if I tell you, "We just closed on a six-million-dollar house," what joy does that bring you? None. But if I tell you, "Hey, guys, we are here praying for this family and seeking the Lord and seeing what the Lord can do for them, and they came to the Lord," what a rejoicing moment.

So, our sole focus has to be changed, and the challenge, 1 Peter 1:8-9, "Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, **you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy**, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls." Have you ever had that, where you should be feeling down, but you're not? And again, I say this, the Scripture is very clear: "The rain falls on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:45). God is impartial.

Let me give you an example from reality. In Texas, people sent their kids to a youth camp. They'll never see them again. What do we say? What do we do? How do we act? Is God still good? 'Yes' Are you sure? 'YES' That means there are things that we don't understand. And

we have to leave things that are God's to God. Don't try to explain the Eternal One. Because here's the perception, here's the thought: that the eternal God, who's perfect in everything, owes me an explanation, and He doesn't. The closest we get is Job, when God says, "Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me" (Job 38:3). That's the closest we get, or we get the arguments of Paul in Romans, he says, "Who are you, O man, to talk back to God?" (Romans 9:20). It's like my seven-year-old daughter telling me, "Daddy, I know what you do at work, and I know everything about your work." I would say, "No, sweetie, you don't know anything." Right.

My point here is we don't know what God is doing, and ultimately, here's what we expect: Are we sinners? "Yes." Are we sinners? "YES." Okay. Do we always do the will of God? "No." Are we always seeking God? "No." Keep that perspective because the Bible says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights" (James 1:17). The fact that this morning you're here is a good thing. It's because God enabled you. The fact that you're a good husband or a good wife, it's because God equips you. The fact that you're a good mother, a good grandmother, a good grandfather is because God is enabling you. The world, as ugly as it is, still has pockets of prettiness. It's because of the God who enables it, and the God who sustains it, and the God who moves it.

Now, think about that. Think about every time you're here, and you're being able to worship, being able to sit down and being able to exchange ideas with a friend, uplift somebody, help someone else. These are all the enablements of God in your life. Now, how good is He? Beyond good, beyond gracious, beyond kind, beyond merciful, because in reality, we seek this. He's giving us this, but He's saying, "Son, daughter, come this way. I'm gonna create in your life situations that you don't like, that will change you."

Back to my point of the story: As our business was failing for a year and a half, almost, I spent every single night praying to the Lord, to three-or-four in the morning, crying, pleading, you name it. "Lord, I have four kids. My wife depends on me for work. How do I support my family? What do I do? Lord, please turn it around. I beg you. What do I need to do?" For a year and a half, the Lord said nothing. The only thing He said was, "That's enough. Get up. Walk." That's it. I wasn't really heavily involved in a lot of things. "Get up and walk," because why? I was seeking happiness. I was seeking things that brought me joy, not brought Him joy. Well, guess what? The good Lord took that and said, "No, son, I'm going to change that."

And the greatest thing that I could tell you that's in my life now is being able to be up here, be back there, over there, serving you, because it lets me know that I'm not here because of myself. And I'll be very frank with you: serving in the church is like, you've heard of Baskin-Robbins, 31 flavors? Well, church is like 250 flavors, right. Everybody's got an opinion about everything, all the time, and there is no leader, there is no servant that can serve without the

joy of the Lord. Because it gets tiring, because let's say you put together a nice chair, somebody says, "Well, that's not a nice shade of brown." Okay, you put together a little supper, and they said, "Well, they have better ones over there," right? Again, a point to illustrate a bigger point: It's about the joy of the Lord.

#### **IV. Joy in Trials: The Proof of Faith and Sovereign Testing**

**Main Point:** Trials are not random. God ordains them for our sanctification and growth in joy.

**James 1:2-3** – “Count it all joy... when you meet trials...”

**Romans 8:28-29** – “All things work together... to be conformed to His Son.”

**1 Peter 1:6-7** – “Though now you suffer... you greatly rejoice.”

**Challenge:** *Am I Resisting or trusting God's refining work in my trials? Joy is found in trusting his purpose even when I don't understand them.*

Go to the next one: **Joy in trials**. We stopped on this one. I've talked about this one, right? The challenge point: Am I resisting or trusting God's refining work in my trials? If you're going through something right now, how are you going through it? Are you pleading, begging the Lord? Are you fighting with the Lord? Are you upset at the Lord? Has it impacted your worship? Do you belong to a Bible study? Is your church attendance sporadic based on how you feel that Sunday morning or that Thursday evening? These are all things for you to think about.

#### **V. Joy in Salvation: Grace Alone, Through Faith Alone**

**Main Point:** The foundation of joy is the gospel. We are justified by grace, not by works.

**Isaiah 61:10** – “He has clothed me with garments of salvation...”

**Luke 2:10-11** – “Good news of great joy... a Savior is born.”

**Romans 5:1-2** – “We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.”

**Challenge:** *Am I daily rejoicing in the gospel, or am I living as if joy depends on me? Rest in Christ's finished work.*

**Joy in salvation:** Am I daily rejoicing in the gospel? Let me tell you something: Does everyone want a big house? Show of hands, please. We're in church, let's be honest. Thank you for your honesty. Does everyone want a lot of money so you don't have to wake up and go to work?" Amen, amen. That was a fast one! That was a fast one. Okay. So, let me just tell you guys something here: To the children of God, I see this. There will be a day where there'll be no more tears, no more suffering. There'll be no more inequality, unfairness. There'll be no

more injustice. There'll be no more things that bring people down while other people stand up. There'll be a place where the streets are gold, the sea is glassy and beautiful, and Jesus reigns! There'll be a place where all the things that you did on earth that were to honor God, the Lord will reward you for. There'll be a place where the vile, the disgusting, the unrepentant will not be allowed. Do you live like that place is a reality? If you do, then you rejoice daily. Even my sin reminds me of how dependent I am on God. That's the reality of living gospel-centered, pushing forward every day you're on this earth.

Even the young folks, every day you're on this earth, kids, you're one day closer to the returning of Christ. And that's a reality, because the tomb is empty. And then you look at the angels that were there: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). We don't marvel at this. This is not a story that we tell our kids just, you know, like the Tooth Fairy or Santa Claus. It's not that. The reality of Christ is just as real as your parents sitting next to you, more real because He's eternal.

## **VI. Joy in Worship and Covenant Community**

**Main Point:** God designed joy to flourish in the gathered worship of the church and in Christian fellowship.

**Acts 2:46** – “They broke bread together with glad and sincere hearts.”

**Psalm 122:1** – “I was glad when they said... let us go to the house of the Lord.”

**Nehemiah 8:10** – “The joy of the Lord is your strength.”

**Challenge:** *Am I treating worship and Christian community as optional or essential? Seek joy where God has promised to give it—among His people.*

Let's go to the next point here: **Joy in worship**. Why is this important? Am I treating worship in the Christian community as optional or essential? When you have joy from the Lord, immediately it goes to the people. Immediately! Because, you know, have you ever, like, example, we have this joke, me and my wife, when I want to get on her nerves, I will say to her, "Don't steal my joy," after I've said something that would irk her. And that would, that's just means, "Hey, you can't hit me back," right, selfishly, just jokingly. But when you are connected to the Lord, the joy is communal.

And you see, Acts 2:46, "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts." Psalm 122:1, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" And the reason I'm not going over the verses, I want you to look at them, and I want you to think. So, think about that: Is your communion with the saints of God, Sunday after Sunday after Sunday?

The elders know, the leadership knows, the last two weeks I was at soccer tournaments, and it was the worst feeling in the world to not come and commune with you guys. The worst feeling in the world; I felt my entire week was incomplete. Do you feel that way about Sunday worship? And not only worship, but worship open to the people of God, because, remember, worship is this way (upward), and it impacts this way (around you). It's not just, "Well, I'm going to worship God, and I'm going to be a complete person, bad person, or whatever person you want to call it towards my fellow neighbors." So, that's another thought, right?

## **VII. Joy Despite Sorrows: Christ Our Anchor**

**Main Point:** Joy does not eliminate sorrow—but it does outlast it. Christ is our anchor in the storm.

**John 16:33** – “In this world you will have trouble... but I have overcome...”

**Matthew 5:4** – “Blessed are those who mourn...”

**2 Corinthians 6:10** – “Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing...”

**Challenge:** *What do I run to when I'm sorrowful—distraction or Christ? Let your sorrow lead you deeper into joy through Him.*

Let's go to the next slide here: **Joy despite sorrows**. "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Corinthians 6:10). What do I run to when I'm sorrowful? Because we can agree, sorrow happens in life on this side of eternity. It is not a walk in the park. You're confronted with an evil world, an evil heart, evil intentions of your own. You're confronted by yourself, as a matter of fact. You know, there's two analogies, there's two stories that you gotta think about: A person doesn't know how sinful they are until they get married. You don't know how selfish you are until you get married. And I'm speaking for myself only, not even talking about my wife. I didn't know. I thought I was a good person, giving, kind. But then I found out, no, not so much. Not so much. You have a limit of your kindness; you have a limit of your goodness; you have a limit of these things. And that limit hits empty quick, right.

And then the other part is understanding that you will have trouble, but there are people within these pews that the trouble that came, that is meant to refine them, they're stuck there. And they've let the trouble now determine how they are pouring out. Think about what I'm saying to you. I'm not saying that the trouble you're encountering is easy. I'm not saying that at all. I'm not saying that the trouble you've encountered is a walk in the park, because everyone, to themselves, whatever burdens you carry, are heavy for you. That's why you have the church. Our job together is to help carry one another's burdens. Our job together is to say, "Hey, Danny, that piano that's on your back, it's going to break your back. Can I come alongside you and help you?" And then Steve comes in and says, "Hey, guys, Ninos, you

might be a little too small for the piano; it's too big for you." "Don't say that, Steve, please." But, "Let me help." And Don comes along, and then you come along. That's the job of the church: to carry one another's burdens, to lift each other's troubles to the One who's the author of everything in your life.

Think about that. Trouble comes, we run the other way, right? Or do we run to the Lord? Again, today, either you'll come out of this service, by the grace of God, bothered—praise God—or think, "Who does this guy think he is?" I'll tell you who I am: I'm a person that should be sitting right next to you. I'm a person that struggles with the same things you struggle with. The only difference is God got my attention and kind of refocused me in this area.

### **VIII. Eternal Joy: The Future Glory**

**Main Point:** Our greatest joy lies ahead—in the eternal presence of God, where sin and sorrow are no more.

**Psalm 16:11** – “In your presence is fullness of joy...”

**Revelation 21:4** – “He will wipe away every tear...”

**Romans 8:18** – “The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing...”

**Challenge:** *Am I living with eternity in view? Let the hope of future joy shape your present priorities.*

Like we said, right, **eternal joy**, the future kavod (glory). Am I living with eternity in view? And this is the reality of how we're called to live. Christians are called to live, right, in a way that they're explaining what's coming with such greatness, right, meaning such hope. And I want to go back to something that I wrote down over here from one of my favorite preachers of all time, R.C. Sproul. Okay, I was watching a video late last night of R.C. Sproul. Yes, I was video, like, midnight. He said—I wrote it down, hopefully, by the grace of God, I do it justice—“The way you have to pursue God is to allow the Word of God and the knowledge of God to dominate your way of thinking.” You have to pursue God in a way that you allow the Word of God, the truth of God, to dominate your way of thinking. Think about that. No pun intended there.

When, because I filter things as a man, when I'm, let's say, when I'm dealing with my wife, when I'm dealing with my children as a father, as a person, as my background, as my history, as all of these things, right. But I'm called, when I pursue the Word of the Lord, and I allow it to dominate my way of thinking, immediately when I speak, the Lord corrects: “No, don't say that. That's your family history. That's the way your father spoke to your mother. That's the way you've learned how to be a man. That's not what I expect.” And fill in the blanks. You have to let the Scripture dominate. You have to let your view of eternity.

Because, if you thought—and this is a big, big thought here—if you really thought you're going to heaven, but for a small time you have to go through struggles on earth, would your perspective be slightly different? But all of us make our struggle this big (wide arms) and make God this big (little distance between hands). And the only way this changes is through the power of His Spirit. This is not self-help. This is not, "Hey, put on your new thought pattern." This is not that. This is, "Lord, I've identified a problem in my life. I want to go through these struggles, still glorifying Your name. How do I do it, Lord? How do I seek You? How do I talk to You while I feel like my world is caving in?"

Ultimately, we all want happiness. We can't lie to ourselves. We all want ideal things, but we live in a fallen world.

**Conclusion: The Joy of the Lord is our Strength**

Joy is not optional—it's part of life in Christ  
Joy is not surface-level—it's anchored in God's sovereign grace  
Joy is not momentary—it lasts forever.

**Nehemiah 8:10** – "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

**Final Challenge:** Each morning this week, pray: *"Lord, help me rejoice not in what I feel, but in who You are and what Christ has done. Let Your joy be my strength today."*

The conclusion: **The joy of the Lord is our strength.** Joy is not optional; it's part of life in Christ. Joy is not surface-level; it's anchored in God's sovereign grace. Joy is not momentary; it lasts forever. Nehemiah 8:10, "Then he said to them, 'Go, eat what is rich and drink what is sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.'"

Think about that thought as you propel out, and my challenge: **Each morning this week, pray, "Lord, help me rejoice, not with what I'm feeling, but according to Your Word. Allow me to see things from Your perspective."** And the other thing is, I was talking to our security team, Tim and the guys out there earlier, and I was explaining something to them: If everything that's good in your life is from God—"Amen, amen, amen."—yeah, okay, good—then what is there not to give honor and glory to God for? Think about that.

In my Christian walk, I'm standing in front of you and not proclaiming to be a good man or a righteous man. I'm a man saved by the blood of Jesus. In my Christian walk, all I bring is foolishness. That's all I bring every day. And what He brings is His powerful Spirit and says, "Child, no, not this, this. Not this, this." Danny knows me—you know what my biggest fear is? Because I've shared it with some of the brothers, my biggest fear is that I, with my history, with my family, with my heritage, with everything, that I don't ruin my wife, and I don't ruin my

children, that I don't scar them. Because left to me, I will—left to myself, I will—because all I know is chaos. And all you know is chaos. Now, not to the young kids; young kids, you guys are exempt from this conversation for a few years. But for the adults, all we know is chaos. So, how can chaos find peace and joy? Well, it has to go to the Author of it.

And we have to get to the point where we submit whatever you're going through, because there are good times. If you're going through them right now, praise God. If you're going through a low time, praise God. If everything is okay, praise God. Because the One who appoints the times and dates where people will live, why? So that all men can seek Him. That's who He is. That's who the God of the Bible is. And you have a duty as a believer to rejoice in the fact of who you are.

Last thing I will tell you: Show of hands, how many are born-again believers today? Amen. You are a child of the Most High God. There is nothing in creation that can separate you from Jesus. Think about that statement. There's nothing—you can't even separate yourself from the King. So, therefore, remember this in those dark moments, in those difficult moments: Pick your head up. Seek the King. He's the only one that can change your perspective.

*Let's pray. Father, God, we thank You. We thank You for this time. We thank You for Your truth. We thank You for Your Word. It is by Your Word that You sustain us, guide us, and lead us. We ask in the powerful name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*