

The Joy Is Mine

2024-10-07 • PASTOR MATT ROSE



John 3

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

John the Baptist had a huge following. Then Jesus showed up and the crowds started leaving John for him. John's disciples were upset about it. John was not. He called himself the friend of the bridegroom and said his joy was now complete. Pastor Matt's point is that joy comes from stepping aside, not from being at the center. Comparison is what keeps most of us from that joy. And the end of John 3 carries a warning: one form of God's wrath is simply being handed over to your own desires. That turns out to be its own kind of chaos.

To get started

- Who do you catch yourself comparing your life to?

Looking back at the message

He was candid about his own Sunday-morning dread. That honesty from a pastor gives the room permission.

- 1 Pastor Matt admitted he sometimes wakes up on a Sunday with dread about things he cannot control. What steals your joy before the day even starts?
- 2 Pastor Matt said when you lack something, take the frustration straight to God, who has all the supply. Most of us measure ourselves against the person who has it instead. Which one do you do first?
- 3 Whatever the person you envy has, it came from the same God who supplies you. How does that change the way you look at what someone else has? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read John 3:22-36. Verse 30 is famous and verse 36 is the one people skip.

- 4 Read John 3:25-30. John's disciples are worried he is losing followers to Jesus. How does John answer them?
- 5 John calls himself the friend of the bridegroom. The friend plans the party and then steps back so the groom can shine. What does that picture tell you about where John found his joy?
- 6 Read verse 36. What does it say happens to those who reject the Son?
- 7 Read Romans 1:24-25. God's judgment here is described as handing people over to what they already wanted. Why is getting what you want sometimes the worst thing that can happen? OPTIONAL

Bringing it home

The loaves-and-fish reframing is the practical move: do your part, hand over the rest.

- 8 Pastor Matt said his job is to bring the loaves and fish, the preparation he can control, and then hand them over for God to multiply. What are you refusing to hand over?
- 9 Being at the center of your own life sounds like freedom, but it carries a cost. Where has it actually cost you joy?
- 10 John said he must decrease so Jesus can increase. What would decreasing look like for you this week, in plain terms?
- 11 Think of a blessing someone else received that you wanted for yourself. What would it take for you to honestly celebrate it? OPTIONAL

The group together

Comparison thrives in silence. Naming it usually deflates it.

- 12 Comparison is everywhere, but almost nobody admits to it. Why is it so hard to say out loud?
- 13 Whose success could this group celebrate together this week?
- 14 Quiet competition can grow inside a group without anyone naming it. How could this group make sure nobody here is secretly keeping score?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

Where do you need to step aside so joy can come back?

You might pray about

- For freedom from comparison
- For joy that does not depend on being at the center
- For anyone living in the chaos of their own desires

