

# **The Fullness of Joy**

**By Elder Mark Looby**  
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We are in a Governor's race here in California right now. These candidates are drawing huge crowds, making lots of promises in order to sway the people to vote for them. Most of the promises that they promise will not happen, right!

Not one of those candidates will lay down their life for you will they. In fact when one is elected to be Governor they will be constantly surrounded by bodyguards, and when there is a major crisis in this state the Governor has the best hiding place to escape the danger and were not invited.

Well there is good news!

Jesus Christ walked on this earth and drew huge crowds of people and all of his promises are true. And Jesus is our hiding place. Jesus laid down His life for us so we can have eternal life. Amen

Let's pray

What was Jesus' main purpose for coming to this earth? Let's read some scripture and find out.

Matthew 1:20-21

<sup>20</sup> The angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. <sup>21</sup> And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

John 1:29

<sup>29</sup> The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Luke 19:10

<sup>10</sup> For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

**And John says that all this was written that our joy may be full.**

1 John 1:4

<sup>4</sup> And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

**Well let me tell you about how the fullness of joy came into my life.**

**When I was 24 years old I helped a women stuck in her car on my street and little did I know she was going to be the love of my life.**

**And little did I know God was going to us her to transform my life.**

Jesus has been seeking me all my life but it wasn't until 2001 that He got my attention, but only through the power of prayer. My wife and daughter came to the faith 3 years before me and I had no desire to join them. I was doing just fine. 3 years that's a long time, can you imagine how much pain and suffering I caused them? What you see in me today is totally the opposite of what I was then. I used to drink, smoke, swear and much more that I don't care

to mention. But to me that was all normal. But I thank the Lord Laura and Briana never stopped praying for me. So as Laura and Briana's lives started to change there was much division in our house. As they grew closer to Christ I was feeling more and more tension. There were a lot of little things that I would do that would annoy them and I could see the disgusting looks on their faces. For an example: I would be watching something violent on TV and I would have it turned up loud and when they came home I would get one of those looks and they would go off into their rooms and close the doors and just to spite them I would turn it up louder. Or I would be talking on the phone engaged in a very ungodly conversation and I would get those grins you no what I mean? I'm pretty sure they didn't even know they were doing it but I saw it and it was starting to worry me a little because it felt like they didn't want to be around me. I was getting so many of these kinds of looks I started to dislike the things that were displeasing to my family. But the thing that got me the most was the loneliness. Because they were going to church on Saturdays I was enjoying the free time I had to myself by hunting and fishing but when I got home nobody was home, there was a note that said we will be home late because we're at a vespers. I thought

when you went to church you went on Sunday and only for an hour or two but this was Saturday and they were gone all day and all evening. So I was feeling left out even though they invited me every time. On Sunday they did some ministry work in the middle of the day so it was kind of hard to plan anything with them. On Wednesday they went to bible study in the evening and when I got home from work they were getting ready to go and by the time they got home I was already in bed. Friday they went to choir practice and worship in the evening and Saturday it started all over again.

I love my family and doing things with them but they were not interested in the things I liked to do anymore. You know Laura would be talking on the phone and I would hear sister so and so or brother so and so and that was a blessing or thank you Jesus. I would think to myself what is going on here I need to find out what it is there up to. The next time they invite me to one of their functions I'm going to go. Next vesper Briana asked if I wanted to go and I said yes and you should have seen the joy on their faces. So I went and I was a little nervous because I thought for sure I was going to get some of those strange looks at the sinner husband, but it was nothing like that at all these people were loving and

caring and treated me like they knew me forever. They had a worship service and sang songs and gave testimonies of how Jesus blessed them that week and they played bible games. I felt very comfortable and I was feeling much better about what my wife and daughter were doing. From time to time I would go along with them to a fellowship but I still didn't want to go to church. I didn't want to do anymore than what I was doing but the Holy Spirit had another plan.

I have a daughter from a previous marriage who lives in Indiana and because of the broken marriage our relationship is not great. We planned for her to visit for a week but the only time she could come was when Laura's church planned to have a week of prayer. I decided that was ok the prayer meetings were only a couple hours long and while Laura and Briana went to the prayer meetings Stacey and I would have that time to get to know each other better. I'm thankful for Laura and Briana they always made Stacey feel at home. It was a very comfortable setting except when her and I were alone things are different. The past is very hard for us to talk about. She is 29 now and we separated when she was 1 1/2 and we still have a relationship problem. So when it came time for Laura and

Briana to go to the prayer meetings you could tell we didn't want to be alone with each other so even though we didn't want to go to a prayer meeting we decided to go. It was those prayer meetings that changed my life. All the people's prayers, testimonies, scripture reading about Jesus and how Jesus changed their lives and can forgive sins made me want to get to know this Jesus more. Every night we learned more about how to pray so our prayers would be heard and it was all taken straight out of the Bible it was quite an experience and that was the start of my relationship with the Savior. I know those prayer meetings worked on Stacey as well but we're still having some problems so if you can remember please pray for us. I am so thankful for prayer.

As your praying for a loved one or a friend, please don't give up because if Jesus can change this stony heart He can change anybody.

1 John 3:16

<sup>16</sup> Hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because he laid down his life for us:

How could I know that God loves me? Because He laid down His life for you.

You know that the Bible only seeks to prove God's love at the cross. Whenever the Bible wants to prove to you that God loves you it always points to the cross!

1 John 4:10

<sup>10</sup> Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

It always points to the cross!

John 3:16

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

1 John 1:4–10

<sup>4</sup> And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

This is joy that comes with fellowship with God. It's a fullness of joy. Not a temporary joy like:

<sup>5</sup> This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

<sup>6</sup> If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:  
You cannot have fellowship with God if your walking in sin! Paul said:

Galatians 5:19–21

<sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, <sup>20</sup> Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that

they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

**But look at verse 7:**

<sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

<sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Proverbs 28:13

<sup>13</sup> He that covereth his sins shall not prosper:  
But whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

<sup>10</sup> If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

If you've read anything of church history you probably heard about the great evangelist, Dr. Finney. His revival meetings were so powerful that he was known to go into a town and by the time the meetings were over they closed every bar in town for lack of patrons. Dr. Finney held a meeting somewhere back east and when he was walking up the stairs to the church a man called out to him and asked him if he could meet with him after the meeting and Dr. Finney yes I'll meet with you. So when he got to the top of the stairs the Deacons of the church asked him, "What did that man want"? Dr. Finney said, "he wants to talk to me after the meetings" and the Deacons said, "Do you know who that man is"? Dr. Finney said, "No". They said, "That man is the worst man in town, he has killed people and he probably has it in for you. You're not going to meet him are you"? Dr. Finney

said, “Yes I am, I gave the man my word”. So after the meeting the man was waiting for him and he lead him down the street into a dark ally and to a door where he opened the door and said, “Go in” and he locked the door behind him and he sat at a desk in front of him and opened it and pulled out a gun and said, “Sit down”. And he said, “I heard you say something the other night and I want to know if it’s true”. Dr. Finney said, “Well what did you hear me say”? He said, “You said the blood of Jesus Christ God’s Son can cleanse a man from all sin”. Dr. Finney said, “No, I didn’t say that, God said it in His word”. He said, “Wait a minute you don’t know what I’ve done. You are behind a bar with an illegal gambling casino and the machines are fixed and I’ve taken the last dollar from many people and they’ve gone out and committed suicide, you mean God can forgive me for that”? Finney said, “All I can tell you is the bible says, the blood of Jesus Christ God’s Son can cleanse a man from all sin”. He said, “Wait a minute that’s not the whole story, I own the bar out in front and men will come in and drink and their wives will come in rags with their children and beg me not to sell their husbands booze and I throw them out on the street and when their husbands run out of money I throw them out on the street, you mean God can forgive a man like that”? He said, The bible says that the blood of Jesus Christ Gods son can cleanse a man from all sin”. He said, “wait a minute you don’t know the full story, this gun has killed many men that have gotten in my way, I’ve hired men to kill other men, you mean God can forgive me”? Finney said, “All I can tell you is that the bible says all sin”. He said, “ wait a minute, across the street in that big brown stone house and I have a wife and a beautiful little girl and I haven’t said a decent word to my wife in over 16 years, I’ve been miserable I’ve been mean. The other day when my little girl ran up to me I pushed her away and she fell against the stove and was burned seriously. I’ve never told that little girl I love her. **YOU MEAN GOD CAN FORGIVE ME!** And at this point Finney stood up and he grabbed him and began to shake him and he said, “Young man you have told me just about as horrible of a story I’ve ever heard or could dream and I don’t know if I could forgive you but the bible says the blood of Jesus Christ God’s Son can cleanses a man from all sin”. He

said, “That’s all I wanted to know, thank you, you could go and he went over to the door and unlocked it and said you can find your way from here.

The next morning as the sun was coming up, he was walking from the bar over to his home and he came into the house and his wife was in the kitchen with his daughter and he went on up stairs. The mother said to her daughter, “Go upstairs and tell your daddy breakfast is ready”. So the little girl went half way up the stairs and said, “Daddy, momma said breakfast is ready”. And he answered, “Sweetheart tell you mommy, daddy doesn’t want any breakfast this morning”. So she ran down stairs and said, “Mommy, mommy, daddy said he didn’t want any breakfast and he called me sweetheart”. And the mother said, “Honey you must of misunderstood, go back up stairs and tell daddy breakfast is ready”. So she went back up the stairs and said, “Daddy momma said breakfast is ready”. And he said, “Come here honey”. So she went over to him and he picked her up and put her on his lap and began to tell her how much he loved her. Well the mother was wondering what was going on and followed her daughter up the stair and saw him holding his little girl on his lap for the first time with tears running down his cheek and he said, “Come over here honey”, he said, “I found out something last night that is the greatest thing I have ever heard and it’s true”. He said, “The blood of Jesus Christ God’s Son can cleanses a man from all sin”.

He closed the bar and began to become a benefactor in that community, changed by the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**It doesn’t matter how bad the past is Christ paid the price for you and for me and gives hope for all. All you have to do is confess your sins and He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. Amen.**

We should not try to lessen our guilt by excusing sin. We must accept God’s estimate of sin, and that is heavy indeed. Calvary alone can

reveal the terrible enormity of sin. If we had to bear our own guilt, it would crush us. But the sinless One has taken our place; though undeserving, He has borne our iniquity. "If we confess our sins," God "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. Glorious truth!--just to His own law, and yet the Justifier of all that believe in Jesus. "Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy." Micah 7:18. {MB 116.1}<sup>1</sup>

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White, E. G. (1896; 2002). *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* (116). Pacific Press Publishing Association.