***Session 10 Experiencing the Joy of the Father***

1. THE NEED FOR THE REVELATION OF THE FATHER

9“As the Father ﻿loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. Jn 15:9

*Go ahead and turn in your Bibles to* ***John 15****.* ***John 15****. Let’s pray. Father, we thank You, Lord, that we can come before Your throne, Father, through the shed blood of Your Son, Father, we can stand before You in Your righteousness. Father, I ask You, Lord, that the anointing that abides in us, Lord, that You would stir it and it would teach us things, Father, concerning You and Your Son. Father, that Your Spirit would magnify Your Son in our hearts, Lord, that we would know more of You, experience more of You, even tonight, Father, I ask that You would release increased measures of light of the Holy Spirit on our hearts and on our minds. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

*Well, tonight I want to talk about, it says on the notes, “Entering the Joy of the Father.” Really it’s supposed to be “Experiencing the Joy of the Father,” so that’s what we’re talking about tonight, experiencing the joy of the Father. Joy can be a bit of an abstract concept. There’s a lot of ideas about joy, but I think in the simplest way of defining way is this deep sense of well-being. This deep sense of well-being. Now, there are other facets of joy in terms of the pleasure dimension of joy that we experience in the heart, the strengthening dimensions of joy that we experience in our heart. There is the enjoyment dimension of joy but fundamentally the issue of joy is that deep sense of well-being.*

*As I was getting ready for tonight, I just kept thinking about* ***Isaiah 24****. I don’t have that in the notes but* ***Isaiah 24:8-11****, one of the things that the prophet speaks of, He talks about the failure of joy in the earth, that because of the crisis morally, economically, socially, militarily, politically, all the different crises that will emerge as the end of the age draws nigh, one of the things we will see is a failure of joy among the unbelieving community. So, it makes the subject of the joy of the Lord or the joy of the Father, this sense of well-being, absolutely important.* ***Isaiah 24:8-11*** *we see the removal of joy from the earth and then the increase of confusion among the nations.*

*In fact, the confusion is so strong it says that even when men and women will turn to substance abuse that even the substance will prove itself absolutely powerless from the beginning insofar as being able to numb the pain and confusion of the soul. In other words, there will be no escaping from the pain and the confusion, but the good news is that we have the joy of the Father that we can experience in the gospel, and that is really what we’re talking about tonight. We’re talking about experiencing the joy of the Father.*

*I believe that the experiencing of His joy is one of the key elements of the grace of God. It’s one of the key elements that empowers and invigorates the heart to stay steady in the face of pressure, to stay steady in the face of temptations, just to stay steady in terms of our walk with the Lord, is this issue of joy as a very important element of the grace of God, and I will share a very brief testimony about that later on.*

***John 15:9****, Jesus, I believe, gives probably one of the most if not the most exhortation and commandment to His people, and that is that we are to abide in His love. That we are to dwell there. We are to live there. In other words, we are to interact with Him in that place. We want to fill our hearts and our minds, through the Word, with information about His love. We want to ask Him about His love. We want to speak of His love, we want to express His love.*

*What is interesting is that the love that He calls us to abide in, the love He calls us to interact with, He gives us the definition of that love, and it’s in the first part of the verse. It is the love of the Father for the Son. That’s the love by which He loves us. The exact same way that God loves God is the way that God loves us. It’s an interesting definition and we’ll get back to that in a few moments as to why that is so important and why that is critical for us as we grow in the things of the Lord.*

* 1. A theological premise of the forerunner ministry is focused on the Spirit’s emphasis on the end-time revelation of the Father. There is great need for understanding God the Father.

6And he (Elijah) will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and ﻿strike the earth with ﻿a curse. Mal 4:5–6

*Paragraph A. A theological premise of the forerunner ministry is that the Spirit, as things unfold, is going to bring great focus to the end-time revelation of the Father. There is great need, more than ever, of the understanding of God the Father, and it’s absolutely amazing how much the New Testament focuses on this attribute of God. There are 13 hints towards fatherly characteristics, so to speak, of the Father in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament it gets highlighted over 300 times. That’s how much this theme of the Father dominates, really, Jesus’ ministry as well as the ministry of the apostles.*

* 1. One of Jesus’ primary aims in Jn. 13-17 is to equip His disciples to grow in the knowledge of the Father by confidently engaging with as well as receiving His Person and leadership. Growing in our understanding of the glory of the Father is essential to our faith. Jesus’ revelation of the Father is His primary strategy to equip the church in the 1st commandment.

26And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love ﻿with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them. Jn 17:26

*Paragraph B. One of Jesus’ aims in* ***John 13-17****, which is the focus of this course, is to equip the hearts of His followers to grow in intimacy with the Father. That is, I believe, the primary aim of these five chapters is to equip His apostles right then and there, but really to equip us as believers to grow in intimacy, to grow in our relationship in knowing the truth of who the Father is. You know, I think of the woman at the well, where Jesus says that the Father was seeking worshippers who would worship Him in spirit and in truth. In other words, He is looking for worshippers, men and women, or followers who would interact with Him by the Spirit through Holy Spirit interaction, number one, and that they would worship Him or they would know Him in truth.*

*Again, there’s a lot to be said about that truth. One, it’s just the basic that we would worship Him according to the truth of the Word, the things that He says is true and so forth, but for tonight, part of what He’s talking about is that we worship Him according to the truth of who He is, that we would have a proper, biblical understanding of who the Father is, called the subject of the knowledge of God. That we would have right understanding of who the Father is, what He is like, what He thinks, what He feels, what He is up to, what His agenda is and so forth, so the Lord is equipping the church to interact with the Father, to grow in intimacy with Him, so that we can, number one confidently engage with the Father, confidently interact with the Father number one, number two, that we can receive of the Father’s leadership, and that, number three, that we would understand the glory of the Father as it pertains to what it is that He's up to, in terms of where is this whole thing called human history, this whole thing called the plan of human redemption, where is it all going?*

*So,* ***John 13-17*** *is seeking to equip our hearts to then interact with the Father, to confidently interact with Him, number one, to receive of His leadership, and number three, to understand what He’s up to. It is the primary focus of Jesus’ ministry, and in* ***John 17:26****, the very last verse of these five chapters, Jesus makes a startling statement. He says, “Father, I have declared to them Your name.” In other words, “I have spoken to them about You,” but then the next thing He says, He says, “I will continue to talk to them about You.” So, for thirty-three years Jesus spoke to them about the Father, and after His death, burial, and resurrection, but the Holy Spirit, He is going to continue to talk to us about the Father, and I believe that even in the ages to come He’s going to continue to talk to us about the Father.*

***Ephesians 2:6*** *tells us that we’ve been raised up altogether, right? To be seated in heavenly places, and then* ***verse 7*** *he says, “So that in the ages to come He may demonstrate to us the extravagance of His kindness,” the Father’s kindness that is discovered in the person of Jesus Christ. One of the things that we get to look forward to in the age to come is discovering how indescribably kind the Father is. It will absolutely blow our minds that He truly is and will be the kindest person that we will have ever met.*

*So, Jesus in His ministry, He speaks to us about the Father. After His resurrection and ascension by the Spirit He speaks to us about the Father, but I believe that in the ages to come He will unfold to us just layers, glory upon glory upon glory upon glory about who the Father is, because one of the most amazing things, I’m kind of getting a little bit ahead of myself, but one of the amazing things is, think about this, in eternity past, if we can even let our minds go there, but in eternity past the Father and the Son were in deep interaction with one another, I mean, knowing each other intimately and with the Spirit, and somewhere in there they came up with this plan and said, “You know what? We’ve got to make human beings and bring them into this discovery.” It’s absolutely amazing.*

*So, the subject of the revelation of the Father, I believe, is Jesus’ primary strategy to equip the church in the First Commandment. It’s His primary strategy. We can’t get away from it. There is no other strategy to connect our hearts to grow in the First Commandment, to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. And so, Jesus says in* ***John 17:26****, He says, I’ve declared to them Your name, I will declare, it for this reason. That the love with which You have loved Me might be in them.*

* 1. The understanding of the Father was climatic in the mind of Paul’s apostolic ministry and foremost on Jesus’ mind both in His relationship with God and His messianic mission.

28“Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God (the Father) may be all in all.” 1 Co 15:28

*Paragraph C. The understanding of the Father was climatic in Paul’s mind, in Paul apostolic ministry. I believe that He saw the end of all things being summed up in the embrace of the Father. Again, it was also foremost on Jesus’ mind. Right there in the notes,* ***1 Corinthians 15:28****, it’s a powerful passage talking about Jesus’ leadership when He comes back to the earth, and that how, for a thousand years, (now, it doesn’t say there it’s for a thousand years, but you add a bunch of chapters and passages together it comes down to the millennium), how during the millennium Jesus will use the Father’s authority to bring everything under Jesus’ leadership. All of His enemies will be put under His feet. All the spheres of society, the environment, the economics, the politics, everything will bend its knee to the Son of God, but Paul says it doesn’t end there. He says after everything is under Jesus’ leadership, then Jesus subjects Himself and everything to the Father so that God would be all in all. That everything in all of the created order would be wrapped up in the loving and the kind embrace of the Father.*

* 1. **John 13:1; 16:16, 28; 17:5**-He went to the Father; **13:3**-the Father loves gives all to the Son; **14:2, 6**-Jesus prepares access to the Father; **14:7-9**-knowing Jesus is knowing the Father; **14:12**-we do the Father’s work as Jesus did; **14:13; 15:16; 16:23, 26**-we approach the Father directly; **14:16, 26; 15:26**-the Father gives us the Spirit; **14:10-11, 20; 16:32**-Jesus is in union with the Father, His work and His words; **14:21, 23 -24**-the love of the Father is with those who love the Son;**14:31**-Jesus loves His Father;**15:1**-the Father as vinedresser; **15:8**-the Father is glorified in our fruit bearing; **15:9-10**-we are to interact with the Father’s love for His Son; **15:15; 16:15, 25**-Jesus made all the Father declared to Him; **15:23-24**-to hate the Son is to hate the Father; **16:27**-the Father loves us; **17:1**-Jesus glorifies the Father; **17:11, 21, 24**-the name of the Father’s keeps us; **17:25**-the Father is eternally known by the Son

*Paragraph D. I have a bunch of verses there and you can look at those in your own time, but these are verses in* ***John 13-17*** *where the Father is being highlighted. It’s all over these five chapters. Jesus speaks so much about the Father. He speaks about the Father’s love for the Son in* ***John 13:3****. He talks about how Jesus is preparing access for us to be able to engage with the Father. Later on, He talks about the fact that we can, this was mind-boggling to the apostles, that we can have direct access to the Father. I mean, this was just unheard of. I mean, up until this point the only way that you could basically interact with God was through a priest or through a prophet, and Jesus comes on the scene and says, “You know what? I’ve got good news for you. I have come to make a way for you for you to directly engage with my Father.” It’s stunning.*

*And He really blows their mind in* ***chapter 16*** *when He goes, “Guess what? The day will come when you won’t even have to come to Me to ask Me to talk to Him for you. You can talk to Him yourself.” I mean, it’s absolutely amazing that we would have the exact same access and exact same relationship to the Father available to us as He has with His Son. In that regard, there’s no second-class citizens. We are to interact with the Father’s love for His Son, Jesus says. Now, the thing that’s amazing is that in* ***John 15:15****,* ***16:15****, and* ***16:25****, Jesus made it clear that what He declared to us is what the Father had declared to Him.*

*I mean, just thing about this right? That the things He communicates to us about the Father, about His plans, about His ways, are the things that the Father whispered to the Son in secret. Now, we won’t have time to get into this, but I just want to give you three chapters just for your consideration. There’s* ***Daniel 7:9-14****,* ***Ezekiel 1:26-28****, for that matter, you can go all of* ***Ezekiel 1****, and then* ***Revelation 4-5****. What we see there is we see in these three chapters a glimpse of the eternal counsels of the Godhead, where we see this interaction between the Father and the Son, and it was in that place and it is in that place where the Father whispers things to His Son, and those holy, those secret things, by the way, they’re all found within the Word of God, so let me just be clear about that, they’re there, they are revealed in the Scripture, these things are therefore made plain. They are made known to us. I think of* ***Deuteronomy 28:28*** *that the secret things belong to the Lord but the things revealed belong to man. There are things that God made known to us through the Word of God that are available to us as means to us really entering into and experiencing the joy of the Lord.*

* 1. Jesus’ primary ministry aim is to equip believers to grow in the knowledge of the Father, teaching about His desire for His people, displaying His power and proclaiming His purpose. Understanding the glory of the Father is essential to our faith, love and maturity. Jesus’ revelation of the Father is His primary strategy to equip the church in the 1st commandment.

*Paragraph E., Jesus’ primary ministry aim, again, is to equip us to grow in the knowledge of God, and the way that He did that was He was teaching us about the Father’s desire for His people. He also did it by displaying the Father’s power. When we’re talking about the signs and wonders ministry it is not just to be glamorous or excite our services a little bit. No, the manifestation of power to heal the sick, to deliver the oppressed, to give sight to the blind and hearing to those who can’t hear and even to bring supernatural provision as Jesus did with the multiplication of bread, all that was part of Jesus displaying the nature and the character and the concern and the power of His Father.*

*So, Jesus connected us with the Father’s desire for His people. He displayed the Father’s power, and He also declared to us the Father’s purpose. Now, what is interesting, back to* ***Daniel 7****, again, I just want to highlight the verse again. In* ***Daniel 7:13-14****, what we see there is that Jesus, the Son of Man, the Father gives Him, the vast, divine empire is being given to the Son of God. All of the leadership, the whole administration, all of the resources, the whole kingdom is being given to the Son of God in* ***Daniel 7:13-14****, but the thing that is staggering, I mean, just absolutely staggering about that chapter, is how, in* ***verses 18****,* ***21****,* ***26****, we see the most unbelievable thing, and that is that the same kingdom that the Father gives to His Son, He wants to give that kingdom to His people. It’s staggering. What we see in* ***Daniel 7****, really, is we see the Father’s leadership in terms of how it is that He’s leading the nations to bring the church, to bring the people of God into the very same inheritance that He gives to His Son.*

*Incidentally, in* ***John 3:35****, by the way, this is part of the love of God. There are, again, I’m getting a little bit ahead of myself but I’ve got the verses in here. There are passages that actually define for us a little bit more, give us a little bit more insight into what it means for the Father to love the Son. Yes, there is the emotional component to it where we feel the nature of God’s love, but there are some real concepts that the Father wants to unlock to help us understand what it means for Him to love His Son.*

*We all know* ***John 3:16****, for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, but in* ***John 3:35*** *this is what it says. It says, “Because the Father loved the Son, He gave Him everything.” It’s almost like the other side of the coin where, for God so loved the world He gave His Son,* ***John 3:16****, but in* ***John 3:35****, for God so loved His Son He gave Him the world. He gave Him everything.*

*Well, the apostle Paul comes on the scene and he really blows our minds in 1 Corinthians 3, and he looks at the carnal Corinthians and he says, “Guys, you know what your problem is?”*

*“What is our problem? Tell us what our problem is.”*

*He says, “You are completely disconnected from the fact that everything is yours. Everything is yours.”*

*You know, I mentioned this a couple weeks ago that the thing that’s so amazing is that, for instance, we know the story of Esther, Esther and Xerxes, the whole deal. After he got all excited because he got a good dinner, he said to her, “You know what? This is amazing! I will give you half my kingdom.”*

*It’s like, “Wow. Okay.” Well, Daniel comes on the scene in Daniel 5, with Belshazzar and that whole situation there, and he goes, “Man, you interpreted the writing on the wall. This is amazing! I’ll give you a third of my kingdom.” I mean, think about this. That is a lot of power, a lot resources, a lot of everything.*

*Jesus comes on the scene in* ***Luke 12:32****. He says, “It is My Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Not half of it, not a third, not a quarter, all of it. Why? Because He loves us in the exact same way He loves His Son. The same freedom, so to speak, of heart and generosity and openness of heart that He has towards His Son, that everything is given to Him. That is the exact same way that the Father loves us, that all things are ours that belong to us. It’s amazing.*

* 1. The Law, Prophets and Psalms show us God’s fatherly attributes, yet, knowing God as Father and our privilege of direct access to Him was not known until the Son made Him known.

21“…Father, … You have hidden … and revealed them to babes. … Father, … 22All ﻿things (pertaining the Father’s heart, ways and plans) have been delivered to Me …, and ﻿no one knows…the Father is except the Son, and…whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” Lk 10:21–22

*Paragraph F. The Law and the Prophets, they show us God’s fatherly attributes, yet knowing God as Father and our privilege to have direct access to Him was not known until the Son made Him known. It was the beginning of the mystery revealed. We see at least seven places, there’s more, but, you know, I’m going to make it eight. I’m going to give you all eight. There are at least eight places where the apostle talks about this thing called the mystery.*

*The first one is in* ***1 Timothy 3:16****.* ***1 Timothy 3:16****. Great is the mystery of godliness, Paul says. The second one is* ***1 Corinthians 15:52*** *where Paul says, “I tell you a mystery. We won’t all fall asleep but we’ll be changed with the twinkling of an eye,” talking about the resurrection.* ***Ephesians 1:9-10****, Paul talks about the mystery of His will, which is the bringing together of all things in heaven and all things on the earth under Jesus’ leadership. That’s* ***Ephesians 1:9-10****.*

***Ephesians 3:9****, Paul there talks about the fellowship of the mystery, and there he’s talking about the Father’s plan to bring Jew and Gentile together as one new man, and that this new man would be filled with the fullness of God’s power and glory. Then,* ***Ephesians 5:33****, Paul talks about the great mystery, talking about the Bride of Christ,* ***Ephesians 5:33****.* ***Colossians 1:27*** *is another one. It’s the mystery of Christ in you the hope of glory, the indwelling of God’s presence in the individual believer as well as the corporate people together being indwelt by the Spirit of God,* ***Colossians 1:27****.*

***Romans 11:25*** *is the salvation of the Jewish people at the end of the age. Romans 11:25. But in* ***Romans 16:24-27*** *Paul says that the gospel is according to this mystery that is kept secret. Now, what is this mystery? Well, the good news is that the mystery is really no longer a mystery. The mystery is no longer a mystery because these verses that we just looked at actually tell us what the mystery is, so it’s no longer a mystery. I’m going to say this again – the mystery is no longer a mystery, because these verses that we just looked at actually tell us what the mystery is, so it’s no longer a mystery. But the part I want to highlight is that the very foundation of the mystery, Jesus highlights in* ***Luke 10****.* ***Luke 10****.*

*Because one of the things is that when you look at these verses, they don’t all say the same thing but most of them, many of them do. They’ll say that there was a plan. Instead of mystery, they are saying that there was a plan and that this plan was hidden in the heart of God and it was kept from even the wisest of people. It was kept from the greatest of the prophets. Isaiah didn’t get this plan. Jeremiah didn’t get this plan. Ezekiel didn’t get the plan. Even Moses, with a all of his face-to-face encounters with the Lord, he did not have access to this plan.*

*You know, sometimes I, I mean, I don’t know if it really happened like this, but every now and then I imagine Moses coming back home from his quiet time, that what’s they called it back then, and he’s a little frustrated. I imagine Zipporah going, “What’s the matter?”*

*He’s like, “I don’t know. He’s keeping something from me.”*

*You know? “Well, how do you know?”*

*He goes, “Well, I do have these face-to-face encounters and I can tell He’s holding back. He’s not telling me something.”*

*I mean, even Solomon was completely baffled. He did not have insight into this plan, but Jesus comes on the scene in* ***Luke 10:20*** *and He is absolutely beside Himself. It says that He rejoiced in the spirit, and He says, “I thank You, Father, that You have hidden these things,” and He’s talking about this plan. He said, “You have hidden these things from the wise and from the prudent and You’ve made them known to whosoever.” When He talks about the babes He’s talking about not the scholars. He says, “You’ve made the secret known to the whosoever. You’ve made it known to the masses.”*

*All the scholars of His time, He says, “It wasn’t just for them. This insight is available to everybody. No one can strut as though they have got more insight than the next person, because, Father, You had this thing locked up and now, in the fullness of time, here I am rejoicing and I’m declaring it, Father, to everyone.” It’s absolutely amazing what’s happening here, and the thing that happens is that Jesus says in* ***verse 22****, “All things that the Father has spoken to Me, they have been delivered to Me.”*

*In other words, “I’m bringing something to you that has been whispered to my heart since before* ***Genesis 1****.” If we have a clock, if we could reach way back to billions and billions and billions of years before* ***Genesis 1****, there was a conversation taking place between the Father and the Son, and Jesus is saying, “Now is the time for me to declare the very beginnings of this mystery, the starting point of this mystery and here it is: there’s a Father.” That was the secret.*

*He says, “No one knows that You are a Father. I am the only one whose known this for billions and billions and billions of years. And now the fullness of time has come, Father, to now let them know who You are.” It is staggering. Absolutely staggering.*

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17And suddenly a voice… ﻿“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Mt 3:17

*Let’s turn to page 2. So, what happens, you know, I don’t know, I can’t think of the time right now, but maybe about a year or two before all this, something amazing happened. Absolutely amazing, because, kind of backtrack for a second, if you think about* ***Revelation 4-5*** *and though it is talking about really now Jesus in the Incarnation, but passages like* ***Revelation 4-5*** *and* ***Daniel 7*** *and* ***Ezekiel 1*** *you just get this sense that you are being brought into this forever conversation. You’re being brought into this forever conversation between the Father and the Son.*

*What’s amazing is that when Jesus comes on the scene He’s about to be baptized by John the Baptist. He gets baptized and when He comes out of the water there’s this voice that thunders from heaven and says, “This is My beloved Son in whom I’m well pleased.”*

* 1. In Exodus 6 & 19 God openly reveals Himself after 400 years and gives new insight concerning Himself to Israel (Ex. 6:2; Jer. 2:2) and it begins a new era in the plan of redemption. Jesus’ baptism occurs after another period where there was no new revelation—the silent years.

*What’s happening here? Well, there’s at least two things going on. Number one is that, in* ***Exodus 6*** *and* ***19****, God revealed Himself openly to Israel after they were in slavery for 400 years. Israel’s in slavery for 400 years and the Lord reveals Himself in a staggering way on Mount Sinai. In fact, the prophet* ***Jeremiah*** *says that it was Israel’s betrothal. It was God coming to the Jewish people as a Bridegroom, and when He does a new era began, and it is the era of the Old Covenant. The era of the Old Covenant begins at Mount Sinai after 400 years of them being in Egypt. Fast forward a couple thousand years, there’s another period, many of you have heard it, it is called the 400 years of silence. So, there’s another time period of 400 years where God is not speaking. He’s not bringing new revelation about Himself. When God started speaking in Mount Sinai, now, there were some encounters He was giving before Mount Sinai, but after Mount Sinai there was a series of encounters upon encounters through the prophets of God showing Israel who He is, and that just came to a crashing halt for about 400 years. No new revelation about who God is.*

*Jesus comes on the scene. He’s baptized, and God does the most staggering thing. Words fail to describe what must have been going on in that moment, because God is about to tell the secret. We all know what it’s like. We’ve got a secret, and it is killing us to not tell someone the secret. We’re doing everything we can to not tell the secret. I’m talking about the good kind. We’re just like, “I can’t wait to tell the person about the surprise.” And the anticipation begins to well up. It begins to build up, but the time has just got to be right to tell them about the surprise.*

*Well, we’re coming up to the time, and I don’t know, because the Father and the Son, they were in deep fellowship with one another, but no one knew there was a Father and a Son dynamic taking place. No one knew this. They didn’t know this before* ***Genesis 1****. The Scripture tells us amazing things about this relationship between the Father and the Son.* ***Proverbs 8*** *talks about how the Son was always rejoicing before the Father. It is a relationship of deep joy and delight and enjoyment and transparency and openness and generosity and delight. I mean, He says, “I was always rejoicing before Him,” the Son says in* ***Proverbs 8****, so this is a deep, deep, deep intimate relationship.* ***John 1:18*** *says that Jesus was hidden in the bosom of the Father. I mean, talk about being near and dear to the Father’s heart, that He was leaning, as it were, on the Father’s breast throughout all of eternity, knowing every intimate thought and feeling and plan that the Father had. It’s absolutely amazing.*

*So,* ***Genesis 1*** *comes on the scene and we don’t know.* ***Exodus*** *comes on the scene. We still don’t know.* ***Numbers*** *comes on the scene.* ***Leviticus****.* ***Deuteronomy****. We still don’t know.* ***Judges****, the prophets. We still don’t know. They’re having a ball, these two, so to speak. I mean it in the most holy way, this relationship between the Father and the Son delighting in one another.* ***Isaiah 42*** *prophesying about the future, “Behold, My Servant in whom is all My delight.” All of the Father’s joy and delight was in the second person of the Trinity.*

*And so, the prophets, nothing,* ***Isaiah****, nothing.* ***Jeremiah****, nothing. I understand that God is timeless but I’m imagining this divine anticipation building up on the inside and Jesus comes on the scene. He gets baptized, He comes out and BOOM! “This My Son.” I mean, this pent-up excitement just thunders from heaven and He has to tell them who He is. And the first word that comes out of His mouth, He goes, “I love Him and all My pleasure is in Him.” I can only imagine what Jesus must have felt like when He heard that familiar voice. What did He feel when He heard that thundering from heaven, that very familiar voice, that relationship, He goes, “Father, this is amazing. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.”*

* 1. God openly reveals that He was eternally a loving, pleasure-filled Father delighting in a Son. The Father speaks audibly to Israel and establishes the primary thing He wants us to know about Him as well inviting us to enter into the fellowship between Himself and His Son. The command to abide (Jn. 15:9) assumes Mt. 3:17 as the cornerstone of our interaction with the Father. The key to joy is by regularly engaging with the Father’s enjoyment of the Son of God.

*This was radical what happened, this introduction of the Son of God. The Father was making a very, very, very important statement in that moment. The Father speaks audibly about His love for His Son and His delight in His Son. He speaks audibly to Israel and establishes the primary thing that He wants us to know. He’s establishing something. That’s why He spoke audibly. He’s establishing something that is absolutely critical, and in many ways it becomes a cornerstone of our faith, and that is this: that you and I are invited into the fellowship between the Father and the Son, that this eternal relationship that existed between the two now we have been invited into the fellowship, and, beloved, that is the foundation, I believe, upon which* ***John 15:9*** *is built, when Jesus says, “As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you, abide in My love.”*

*He’s building it upon that audible voice declaration, “I love this Man. Fully God, fully Man, I love Him, and all My delight is in Him, and I want everyone to know that about Me.” It is absolutely incredible.*

*If you go down to paragraph F with me for a moment.*

* 1. Father is the God of infinite pleasure who eternally loves His Son. In Mt. 3:17 God thunders from heaven the greatest secret of God’s own eternal history, that there is an ongoing forever partnership in which God was and is forever mutually in the joyful and loving embrace of God.

9God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, … 1 Co 1:9

*Paragraph C. Let’s go back there. The Father is the God of infinite pleasure, who eternally love His Son.* ***Matthew 3:17*** *God thunders from heaven. The greatest secret of God’s own eternal history and that there was and is an ongoing, forever, partnership in which God was and is forever mutually in the joyful and loving embrace of God Himself. That’s the secret, that God the Father and the Son, and yes, the Spirit. All three of them were there. The Father speaks audibly, Jesus comes up out of the water, and the Spirit comes resting upon Him like a dove. There was this deep, mutual, joy-filled relationship of God being in the embrace of God, and God speaks audibly because He wants Israel to know, He wants us to know, as His people, that this is our primary inheritance.*

* 1. In Jn 15:9, Jesus commands us to abide in His love, which is the deep wholehearted interaction between Father and Son. It is the ultimate destination of our calling to know the full treasure chest of God’s grace, which is by the Holy Spirit to discover things important to the God.

﻿10But God (the Father) has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God (the Father) … ﻿12Now we have received … the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 1 Co 2:10, 12

* 1. The primary fruit God the Father is cultivating in us is the fruit of true community consistent with His standard, commitment and quality that exists in the Godhead. We are called to participate in the relationship and work of the Father and Son and do so with fellow believers.

3…that you…may have fellowship with us; and…our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4… we write to you that your joy may be full. 1 Jn 1:3–4

12This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you (fruit) Jn 15:12

2Let him kiss me with the kisses of his (abide in His word) mouth— ﻿For ﻿your love is better than wine. 3Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth ….4Draw (intimacy) me away! ﻿We (partnership) will run after you. Song 1:4

*Paragraph E. Now,* ***John 15****, for those of you who’ve been tracking, the primary fruit, not the only fruit, but the primary fruit of* ***John 15*** *is the Father cultivating the fruit of true community. The fruit is in* ***John 15*** *He says, “Abide in Me that you bear fruit,” then He says, “Abide in Me that you keep My commandments,” and then in verse 12 He says, “And this is My commandment that you love one another.” The fruit of true Christian community.*

*Well, what’s the foundation of true Christian community? It is the revelation of how much the Father loves the Son. If you can follow this with me for a second, because it takes a little bit of work just for us to get our heads around it a little bit, but* ***John 15:9****, here’s what Jesus says, “As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you.” I’ll say this again. As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved You.*

*Let’s backtrack. In* ***John 13:34-35*** *He says this: A new commandment I give to you, church, that you love one another as I have loved You.” Okay? A new commandment He gives to us. He says, “I want You to live as one community and I want you to love each other in the exact same way that I have loved you, which, by the way, is the exact same way that My Father has loved Me.” So, even the starting point of Christian community, there’s a lot of talk about community these days. Everyone is something new about community. Community, family, I mean, everyone is talking. The world is talking it, the church is talking it, but very, very few people are actually giving themselves to defining it the way the New Testament defines it. The cornerstone of Christian community is, “As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you, therefore love one another in that way.”*

*So, in* ***1 John****, here’s what John says, “That which we have seen, handled, and touched concerning the Word of life, we have declared it to you,”* ***verse 3****, “that you may have fellowship or community or be in relationship with us,” John says. He continues, “And our fellowship, our relationship is with the Father and with the Son. That is the cornerstone of our relationship. We preach to you the gospel. We’ve talked to you about Christ. We’ve talked to You about His death, burial, and resurrection because we want you to have fellowship with us. We want you to enter into this communion, this community with us, and by the way, this is our community, is with the Father and with the Son,” because through the born-again experience one of the most glorious privileges that we have is we literally get to enter into that relationship between the Father and between the Son. It truly is unbelievable, but yet it’s believable. In fact, that’s the only way that we can access it is by believing it.*

*So, thank You Father, show us more. Help us. Right? Touch our heart. Touch our minds.* ***1 Corinthians 2:16****, these things are not discerned by the mind but they’re spiritually discerned because we have the mind of Christ, Paul says. We are called to participate in the relationship and work of the Father and the Son. I’m going to say this again. We are called to participate in the relationship and the work of the Father and the Son, and do it with fellow believers. And do it with fellow believers.*

***Song of Solomon*** *says, “Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth,” or His word, talking about abiding in His Word. “For Your love is better than wine.” It’s better than any pleasure that this world has to offer. “Because of the fragrance of your good ointments,” Your name, the knowledge of You, “the ointment poured forth.”* ***Verse 4****, “Draw me after You,” draw me into that place of intimacy. And then he says, “And we will run with you.” In other words, I’m going to run with others in this partnership that we have in the gospel.*

* 1. The interaction between the Father and the Son is a central component of the born-again experience that we have been called into as we cultivate our relationship with God. It is the Father’s desire to speak to us about the love and delight He has for His Son. It is the beginning of the apostolic mystery revealed. As we study, meditate and experience the Father’s love for His Son, we grow to understand Jesus’ love for us (Jn 15:9), the Father’s love for us (Jn 17:23) and the nature of the love with which we are called to love the Son of God – Jesus (Jn 17:26).

*If you go down to paragraph F with me for a moment, we see that the interaction between the Father and the Son is a central component to the born-again experience. We’ve been called into it as we cultivate our relationship with God. It is the Father’s desire to speak to us about the love and the delight for His Son. Here’s what happens. As we meditate on and study and experience God’s love for His Son there are at least three things that happen. Number one, we grow* ***John 15:9*** *in our understanding of how much Jesus loves us. Beloved, we cannot grasp how much Jesus loves us without entering in how much the Father loves Jesus. Okay?*

*So, you go, “Okay, okay good. Then I want to know how much the Father then loves Me.”* ***John 17:23****, He goes, “You cannot know how much I love You until You understand how much I love My Son.” You’re like, “Man, it keeps coming back to that.”*

*He goes, “Yes.”*

*“Okay. How much am I supposed to love Your Son?”*

*“Well, you don’t know that until You enter into experiencing how much I love My Son.”*

*So, this audible voice declaration, beloved, it was foundational, it was critical. That’s why He spoke it audibly. He was establishing something in Zion.*

*A couple of years ago I found myself awake. I was already off the NightWatch. I think it was about 2:00 in the morning or so, and I’m in my living room and I couldn’t sleep, so I’m just kind of sitting in my living room, and I was thinking about this truth of the Father loving the Son and therefore that’s how much the Son loves us, and so I just kind of began to pray, and I prayed the simple prayer, you already know what the prayer is, it’s the “Thank You, show me more.”*

*And I’m sitting in my living room and I just sat there. I said, “You know what? I can’t sleep, I’m just going to do something.” So I said, “Father, thank You for loving Your Son. Show me more.” Then I go, “Okay. Nothing.” Say it again. “Father, thank You for loving Your Son. Show me more.” And all of a sudden just the atmosphere around me just shifted. I said, “Ooooh I really like the way this feels. This is amazing.” I said, “Father, thank You for loving Your Son. Show me more.” Waves of His presence just began going up and down my body. I said, “This is amazing.” I said it one more time. I said, “Father, thank You for loving Your Son. Show me more.”*

*I don’t want to exaggerate it, but it really was intense. I wish it happened more. It doesn’t. But it happened that time and I was going, “This is amazing.” I was just sitting there in my living room just enjoying just feeling how much the Father loves His Son and just getting lost in that, and I just literally just kept saying the same thing over and over again. I would wait a couple of minutes and say it again, and it just felt wonderful. I’m just sitting there going, “Man, Lord, this is amazing,” but as I’m doing this my phone goes off and I receive a text from a friend of mine who’s been praying for my wife and I for almost twenty years and they live out in Florida. They said, “Stuart, I’m awake right now, and actually I went to the prayer room and I’m just pacing back and forth and all I keep saying is, ‘Grace upon grace upon Stuart, grace upon grace upon Stuart,’ and I just kept declaring grace over you,” and I’m sitting there going, “This is amazing.”*

*But it wasn’t just the point of that she was praying and the Lord was touching me. It’s that the Lord was saying something. He was saying, “Son, this issue of My love for My Son and you experiencing it, that is the grace upon grace.”*

*It empowers the heart. It strengthens the heart. It solidifies the heart, and again, you know, it’s such a simple prayer. I wish it was more complicated. You know how it is, because if it’s complicated we can brag about how we accomplished it, and the Lord goes, “Nope, I’m making it dumb.” I mean, it is insultingly simple.*

*Father, thank You for loving Your Son, show me more. Okay, because we’re always trying to come up with some kind of formula we can write a book about. Okay, never mind, you know, so the Lord goes, “No, it is really that simple.”*

*I want to encourage you, pray that prayer, “Father, thank You for loving Your Son, show me more. Father, thank You for loving Your Son, show me more. Jesus, thank You thank You that You love Me the way Your Father loves You.” There are so many combinations in this whole thing, but I tell you what. This whole thing about the Father loving the Son, because of that audible voice in* ***Matthew 3:17****, I think it needs to be our go-to place to go to and ask the Father to speak to us about it.*

*Paragraph C. Let’s go back there.*

1. engaged with the father’s delight of his son

*Turn to page three. There are two books I’d like to recommend if you have not read them. You don’t have to, but I’d totally recommend them because they’re excellent books. The first one is called The Pleasures of God, by John Piper. The tagline alone is delicious. “God’s Delight in Being God.” If that doesn’t make you feel “Mufasa” there’s something wrong with you. God’s delight in being God. The Pleasures of God, by John Piper. Another one is called, Delighting in the Trinity, by Michael Reeves. I highly recommend both of those books.*

*So, engaging the Father’s delight in His Son. I believe that the key to joy, the key to the joy that we’re called to walk in is entering into the joy or experiencing the joy of the Father. Now, in* ***Isaiah 42:1*** *it says, “Behold, My Servant in Whom in all My delight.” Many of the commentators agree that when the Lord spoke, when the Father spoke at Jesus’ baptism, “This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well-pleased,” that it was partly fulfilling that prophecy of beholding the Servant in Whom is all His delight.*

* 1. “Part of God’s fullness which he communicates, is his *happiness*. This happiness consists in enjoying and rejoicing in himself...” Jonathan Edwards

*Paragraph A. There’s a quote from Jonathan Edwards. He says, “Part of God’s fullness which He communicates is His happiness,” that He is a glad God. He’s a God filled with gladness. And beloved, if there’s ever a time where we want to connect with that reality. There are many things in terms that are taking place in the heart of God, but the audible voice calls us specifically to enter into experiencing the relationship that He has with His Son, and that is a relationship of infinite delight, pleasure, joy, gladness. Jonathan Edwards calls it happiness. That the fullness of God, which He communicates, is His happiness.*

*His happiness consists in enjoying and rejoicing in Himself. That is Trinitarian applied there. There’s this enjoyment that the Father and the Son and the Spirit have forever. Again, Beloved, there are many, many passages, old and new that point to this, and the Holy Spirit wants to empower our hearts to interact with the Lord based upon these truths.*

* 1. King David was known as a man after God’s own heart. This refers to him being a man who searched out the things near to God’s holy heart, including God’s holy emotions. David had more insight into the emotions of God as the God of gladness, delight and holy pleasure.

8They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house (Father’s House, Jn 14:2, 23), And You give them drink from ﻿the river of Your pleasures. Ps 36:8

11You will show me the ﻿path of life; In Your presence (the Father’s presence) is fullness of joy; at Your right hand (Father’s right hand) are pleasures forevermore. Ps 16:11

*King David. He was a man after God’s own heart. That means many things, but one of the things that it means is that he was one who searched out the holy things of God, which I believe it includes God’s emotions. He’s the one who prophesied* ***Psalm 36:8****, that they are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, I believe the Father’s house, and You gave them drink from the rivers of Your pleasures. As David describes the heart of God, he describes it as a rushing river that is filled with delight, filled with pleasure.* ***Psalm 46****, it says, “There is a river who streams make glad the city of God.” From the very being of God flows a river that is filled with pleasure and is filled with delight, reflecting the very nature of His character.*

***Psalm 16:11****, a familiar passage. You will show me the path of life and in Your presence there is fullness of joy. In His presence there is not just joy. There is fullness of joy. I mean, think about this. Even right now, as America and the nations of the earth don’t know their left hand from their right, and God has some serious things to say about that, yes, but still at the very core in the relationship with His Son there is fullness of joy, and you and I as sons and daughters by the spirit of adoption, we have access to that joy even today.*

*In His presence He says there’s fullness of joy, and at His right hand pleasures forevermore. I mean, think about this. Who is seated at His right hand but the Son of God? In this fellowship there is abounding joy and at His right hand there is just unending release and manifestations of spiritual pleasures. The superior pleasures of the gospel as John Piper calls it.*

* 1. John’s ministry ends with the declaration to behold Jesus and the Father’s audible announcement of delight in His Son. Forerunners call us to turn to the God of delight. It is incredible that one so powerful is so eternally glad, happy and filled with delight. He is safe.

*Paragraph C. John the Baptist, what is interesting is that his ministry ends with this thing. It ends with the declaration, “Behold the Lamb!” Jesus comes on the scene, “Behold, the Lamb,” and it climaxes with the inbreaking of the Father’s voice concerning His Son’s delight. Forerunners call us to turn to God’s delight. It is incredibly powerful. It’s absolutely incredible that one so powerful is eternally glad, happy, and filled with delight. It’s one of the things that makes Him so safe.*

* 1. The Mt. 3:17 announcement of the Father at Jesus’ baptism points us back to the prophecy of Isaiah 42 that calls us to set the gaze of our heart on the Father’s delight in His Son. Jesus is the Son of His love (***Gen 22:2***), His only begotten (***Ps 2:7***), the Son of His delight (***Isa.42:1***)

“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My ﻿Elect One in whom My soul ﻿delights! Isa 42:1

* 1. The gospel is a message of a God with infinite joy and delight for God as well as for His people. This is particularly a truth we must grow in during the days of immaturity to lay a proper foundation for Christian maturity which is manifestly rooted in His joy becoming ours.

11“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and ﻿that your joy may be full. Jn 15:11

* 1. Jesus, who is eternally in the bosom of the Father (Jn 1:18), came to make Him known and continues to make known the most beautiful, delightful and enjoyable Person – Prov 8:30-31.
	2. “Jesus invites us to spend eternity with a happy God when he says, ‘Enter into the joy of your master’ (Matthew 25:23). Jesus lived and died that his joy, God’s joy might be in us and our joy might be full (Jn 15:11; 17:13).” *J. Piper, The Pleasures of God – God’s delight in being God.*

*Paragraph G. Jesus invites us to spend eternity with a happy God, when He says, “Enter into the joy of your master.” I believe, again, that there are significant elements of that joy that we can experience even today in this age, entering into the joy between the Father and the Son. Jesus lived and He died that this joy, God’s joy, might be in us, that our joy may be filled. That’s the thing that the Father offers us by the Spirit. He offers us His joy. It so happens to be that it’s not joy in a vacuum. It’s the joy that He has in relationship with His Son.*

* 1. Daniel 7 and Revelation 4-5 are two key heavenly scenes that connect us with the fellowship between the Father and the Son. God’s grace is to empower us to lift our eyes and lock in with the conversation between the Father and the Son. The eschatological crisis necessitates a response that elevates our thinking and perspective to the conversation around the throne (Prov 8:30-31; Ps 2:6-7; 45:6-7; 89:25-27; 110:1; Isa 49:1-7; Dn 7:13; Ez 1:26-28; Zch 13:7).

*Look at Paragraph H. God’s grace is to empower us to lift up our eyes and to lock in with this relationship. I believe that is part of what the Lord wants to do. By His Spirit He wants to release grace on our hearts to lock in with that decree of* ***Matthew 3:17****, “This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased,” to give us grace to strengthen us, to engage with that relationship. We do that through the Word, and I’ve got several passages over there for you to look at, and there’s a bunch more that I missed, but there’s passages that just give us insight into how the Father feels about the Son, and all we’ve got to do is just sit in that rocking chair and go, “Thank You, show me more.” That’s all we have to do. Say it with faith. Believe it, and say, “Father, thank You. Show me more.” Just let Him touch you and let other passages come to mind and speak that back to Him and take some time to write down some of the thoughts, just impressions that may come to you as you’re speaking these phrases to the Lord.*

*I tell you what, over time it just begins to shift some things. I’ve said this before and I’ll say this again, it just bears repeating, like everybody else, I get stuck where my emotions just get stuck. I tell you what. If I decide by the strength of my own will just to walk that out, it’s a long week. But, and I don’t want to exaggerate this, but I have yet to pause and say this truth, because there’s some much going on, you don’t know if you want to bind, loose, or whatever, and it’s too much. I just go, “Father, thank You for loving Your Son. Show me more.” It’s that simple.*

*I kid you not, it is absolutely amazing how, within a manner of twenty, ten, fifteen, thirty minutes, there is a complete shift in my inner man. Beloved, it is that simple. It is that simple, that as we just give ourselves to these 5-10 second phrases even throughout the day, because, we have our time with the Lord, but even throughout the day we can just whisper these phrases to the Lord. I tell you what, we do this for a year, two, three, four, five and so forth, it just begins to build a wealth of history in our hearts. There’s a greater consistency of righteous emotions. His joy becomes ours, and as things unfold, the* ***Isaiah 24****, when joy gets removed from the earth, there will be a witness, a people, not out of bravado, not because the music is too loud or we get to jump and shout and act silly, but no, but because we have encountered the joy that the Father has towards His Son by speaking simple phrases to Him.*

*Amen? I invite you to stand.*

*Father, here we are, Lord. Lord, we want to experience Your joy. We want to experience, Father, what You feel about Your Son, so here we are Lord. Father, Father, thank You for loving Your Son. Father, we are grateful that You love Your Son. Truly. Our hearts, Father, are touched with appreciation, Lord, of this forever relationship of joy between You and Your Son. Show us more. Show us, Lord. Show us. Show us through the Word. Show us through Your presence. Show us, Lord,* ***Psalm 16:3****, You would cause our hearts to instruct us even in the night. Speak to us, Lord. Would You open up that realm of joy, this rejoicing between You and Your Son, Father. That oil of gladness. Even now, Father, Lord, we say no to the spirit of heaviness right now. No to the spirit of heaviness. Release that oil of gladness, Father, that comes from Your heart. It flows from Your heart to Your Son, and flows from Your Son back to You, Father. We want to enter into Your joy.*

* 1. The Father loved Jesus before the foundation of the world (Jn 17:24). There are statements in the gospels that give us insight into the nature of the Father’s love for His Son. It is important we search out and mediate on these statements (Jn 3:35; 5:20; 10:17; 15:9; 17:10, 23, 24, 26).