

Your Names Are Written in Heaven

A Joy Rightly Placed Is Never Lost

Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 10:17-20



Big Idea

We are tempted to tether our joy to our performance in one way or another, but in so doing we doom our happiness to rise and fall with our good and bad days. Instead, Jesus wants us to settle our joy into something deeper, something more stable—the sovereign grace of God!

(1) A Misplaced Joy (v. 17)

It is because of their accomplishments, because of their great victories at this point, because of what they have done, that we are told: “The seventy-two returned with joy . . .” (v. 17a). But as we shall soon discover, Jesus detects something amiss in this joy. And in love He graciously redirects them to something more stable, to something eternal.

(2) A Gracious Redirection (vv. 18-20)

To this point, the emphasis has been on the sort of things that they can *do*: the demons are subject to us, Satan is falling because of us, we will tread on serpents and scorpions, we have authority over all the power of the enemy—indeed, we are more than conquerors! And just as the disciples are raising their glasses, it’s as if Jesus says: “Not so fast. Yes, yes, well and good. These are amazing effects. But they are effects of some more fundamental cause. They are implications of some more essential principle. They are the fruits of some more basic root system.” And, hence, they are not the sort of things we ought to be rejoicing in ultimately. There is something behind all of these accomplishments, something beneath all of these things. And if you can set your joy there, if you can drop anchor in that, well you will have a joy that no one can touch.

These disciples are more enamored with what they can do by grace than with the fact that they’ve been given grace in the first place. They find the power that they can wield in Jesus’ name more exhilarating than the fact that God knows their name.

There is an abiding temptation we have to tether our joy, to root our sense of identity, our name, to our performance, to what we can produce, to what we can accomplish, to our gifts, our skills, or whatever. And this is a dangerous, a deadly thing. Because your performance, what you’re able to accomplish, it’s going to go up and down. And your joy is going to go up and down with it.

If your name was written in that book from eternity past and if your name will remain in that book to eternity future, how secure can you be in the love of God for you today?! Can you let go of your performance and your accomplishments, of making a name for yourself here and rest, rejoice in what Jesus has accomplished for you? You are known, you are loved, you are kept by God. Set your joy down into that!

Reflection Questions



- Where are you tempted to tether your hope? How are you tempted to try to make a name for yourself? What does that do to your joy? How stable has your joy been lately? Why do you think? What keeps you from receiving your identity in light of what Jesus has accomplished for you?
- Read Rev 13:8 again. What stands out to you? How would truly believing in such a thing affect the way you approach this next week? What other texts in the Bible support the idea God’s choosing us from all of eternity? Do you believe this? Does it comfort or trouble you? Explain.