



# The Joy of Arrival

*Zechariah 9:9*

## ANNOUNCE

Good friday

sunrise - 6:30

north campus - 3:00pm outreach - take flyers

***Pray for Ronda Chesney***

## JOKE

**A little boy saw a sign while riding his bike that said, "Hand-scooped ice-cream." He stopped and ran into the shop, went behind the counter, and started grabbing ice cream from the containers with his bare hands. The clerk was mortified and yelled at the kid, "What on earth are you doing?" The kid looked up innocently and replied, "I just wanted a Palm Sunday!"**

## BIBLE PASSAGE

**[Zec 9:9 NKJV] [9] "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey."**

---

## INTRO

Last week, I was honored to perform a friend's wedding in Palm Springs, California. The view was incredible; the day started a little rainy but ended with perfect sunshine.

Well, I went from Palm Springs to Palm Sunday here in Saint Joe, MO! What do the two have in common? It's not really the weather or the view, and it's not even the same kind of palm branches. Those welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem most likely used branches from the Judean date palm, not the California fan palm.

But I did see something in Palm Springs that made me smile and reminded me of Palm Sunday: the look on the bride and groom's faces when she walked down the aisle. It was the anticipated moment of arrival! They had been waiting, preparing, and looking forward to that moment, and when it arrived, there was a flood of emotions. There was joy and celebration that overflowed with tears, laughter, and passion. The bride arrived, and there was joy.

200 years ago, on what we call Palm Sunday, there was another arrival. It was the arrival of the bridegroom, the King, the Savior Messiah, the Holy One of Israel.

This was the day that Daniel prophesied (to the very day) 173,880 days earlier (**Daniel 9**). The Day when Israel's King of Glory, according to Psalm 24, would enter the great city.

- Those who knew their prophets should have known better about that day. The day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey should have been a day of great anticipation and celebration for the Jewish people, but instead, **there were no open gates to receive the King of glory, only closed and hardened hearts.**
- **Jesus didn't fit the image of the kind of king they wanted. They were more interested in deliverance from Rome than in deliverance from sin.**
- **What should have been a day of overflowing joy turned into a day of jealousy and bitterness from the religious leaders, who then became even more determined to rid themselves of this Jesus**

## APPLICATION

There are many passages in the OT that speak of this special day.

- Psalm 24 describes the entrance of the King of Glory into the city. The command is to lift up the gates and open the everlasting doors so that the King of Glory might come in.
- Psalm 118, the Hallel Psalms, speaks of God's salvation coming and the gates of the city being opened to receive Him. It records the declaration, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" which the people shouted as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey.
- In like fashion, Zechariah prophecies of the coming of God's salvation in the form of this King:

## BIBLE PASSAGE

**[Zec 9:9 NKJV] [9] "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.**

Later, in verse 11, a stunning declaration is made:

**[Zec 9:11 NKJV] [11] "As for you also, Because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.**

Apparently, this mighty and humble king would bring justice and salvation not by initially slaying His enemies but by shedding His own blood to create a covenant by which they could be forgiven and reconciled to Him.

## APPLICATION

I can't tell you how many times I've read this passage and taught it over several Palm Sundays over the years. But there's one aspect of this event and this passage that I've not

taught in this context, and this year, the Holy Spirit specifically led me to it and confirmed it multiple times.

***Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem.***

Rejoice and shout. Apparently, the tone and tenor of the life that has opened up the gates of its heart to Jesus, the King of Glory, and has experienced the radical salvation of God, purchased by the blood of Jesus, should be one of joyful celebration! REJOICE!

- I'm convicted today when I think of how easily I let life and circumstances get me stressed, depressed, sullen, and sad. Perhaps it's my introverted nature or melancholy personality, but I often struggle with joy.
- I hate dancing at parties and weddings (**probably because I look like one of those inflatable dancing contraptions**), and I'm typically not one to see things positive, happy side first.
- Apparently, I have one of those faces that tells others that something is always wrong... because I'm constantly asked, "Are you ok?" Yes, that's just my face!

**QUOTE**

**“ I do not think the church rejoices enough. We all grumble enough and groan enough: but very few of us rejoice enough. -Spurgeon**

Spurgeon

**APPLICATION**

When Christians operate in joy, there's a lightness to their step and a glimmer of hope that always radiates in their hearts despite their circumstances.

- Joy is not fake happiness.
- Joy does not require ignoring difficulties or pretending that pain doesn't exist.
- Joy is a choice to access something that God has for His people that transcends our current challenges, frustrations, and difficulties.

Jesus was the most joyful human to ever live. Jesus wept. Jesus got angry. Jesus had a broken heart. Isaiah 53 declares that Jesus was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief...” but that he ‘bore our grief and carried our sorrows.’

I hope you'll see today that it is one of the most abundant principles found in the scripture regarding the nature of God's people.

- And why shouldn't we be joyful? Our bridegroom is alive forevermore. He's made His presence known to us, has chosen to dwell within us through faith, and has promised to physically come again to take us to be with Him forever. That's joyful news!

## 1 Joy Must be Rooted

### APPLICATION

In the passage of Zecharia, the command to shout and rejoice is directly linked to the arrival of the Messiah, who brings justice, salvation, and authority. In other words, the joy is rooted in God and His salvation.

### ILLUSTRATION

**Story of Victor, the barber who came to Jesus in Palm Springs.**

**The joy and smile on his face when he talked about God and God's blessings and God's guidance. He was joyful in the Lord.**

### BIBLE PASSAGE

**[Psa 144:15 NKJV] [15b] ...Happy are the people whose God is the LORD!**

## BIBLE PASSAGE

**[Neh 8:10 NKJV] [10] Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."**

## JOY OF THE LORD

That exhortation of Nehemiah came at an interesting point for Israel. The people had been separated from the law of God. The priests and the Levites, under Ezra's leadership, helped the people understand the word of God. As a result, the people began weeping. They had missed the mark. They had abandoned God's law. They were ignorant of the Lord's commandments. Once they heard, they wept with a sense of sorrow and burden for all that they had missed.

What is the response from Ezra and Nehemiah? Hey folks, there's a time for sorrow and a time for repentance, but don't forget to rejoice! God doesn't want you to stay stuck under the burdens of your failures; He wants you to know the joy of His salvation!

- Some people have the tendency to carry Christianity around like it's a weight of sorrow. "Hey, how's your walk with the Lord going?" "I'm suffering for Jesus. Life is hard, but God is good. I'm just over here dying to self and pursuing holiness with a frown on my face."
- I don't think the salvation of the Lord was intended to design **Eyeore Christianity!**

Psalm 118, speaking of Christ's triumphal entry, proclaims: ***"This is the day that the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it!" (Psalm 118:24)***

## APPLICATION

The joy we have access to is not only a joy IN the Lord, but it is also a joy that belongs to the Lord that he gifts to us!

EXAMPLE: Old song, "The Joy of the Lord is My Strength."

- If you want the joy you must clap for it, sing for it, dance for it...
- No, grace says that the joy of the Lord is your strength because by his grace, He gives it freely; we must simply choose to access it and walk in it.

## BIBLE PASSAGE

**[Jhn 15:11 NKJV] [11] "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."**

## APPLICATION

There is a reason why every letter from every apostle we have in the scripture has references to the joy available to the believer.

- Paul speaks of rejoicing in the hope we have in Christ
- John speaks of having fulness of joy
- James speaks about having joy in the midst of trials
- Peter speaks of having joy inexpressible and full of glory

And of course, they are all echoing the truths they received from their teacher and master, Jesus:

**[Jhn 16:20-22 NKJV] [20] "Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. [21] "A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. [22] "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.**

Joy is the essence of a relationship with Christ. One author penned that:

## QUOTE

“**Joy is the flag that flies over the castle of our hearts announcing that the King is in residence today.**”

Walter Knight

## APPLICATION

***Joy, Rejoice (257 times in scripture) – to be exceedingly glad***

Of all people, there should none more joyful, glad and happy than the one who has been forgiven and redeemed by the blood of Jesus. The early disciples were identified by the joy that they possessed:

**Act 13:52 NKJV – And all the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.**

*But my life is miserable, my circumstances unbearable, my relationships intolerable...*

- The Bible speaks of Joy that is unconquerable, unspeakable, incomprehensible, inexpressible, full of glory and victorious. As Christians traveling like pilgrims through this world of sorrow, we can access this joy.

But let's be honest, this joy doesn't always feel accessible. It doesn't always come naturally. It has to be chosen and fought for.

Now, I'm not suggesting we give some insincere, fake it-till-you-make-it type of plastic happiness and call it joy. **No, I'm talking about making an active choice to access heaven's realities in the midst of life's difficulties.**



## 2 Joy Must be Chosen

### APPLICATION

Biblically, joy is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5), but rejoicing is also a command. It's one thing to know that the Joy of the Lord is available, another thing to express that joy outwardly and practically.

Listen to these NT commands:

- **1Th 5:16 NKJV – Rejoice always...**
- **Phi 4:4 NKJV – (command) Rejoice (explanation) in the Lord (prescription) always. Again I will say, rejoice!**
- **Jam 1:2 NKJV – count it all joy when you fall into various trials,**
- **1Pe 4:13 NKJV – but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings...**

If we have joy as a fruit, it will also be reflected as a choice, but many of us refuse joy!

### QUOTE

**“There are some Christians that seem to have been reared on Vinegar.”**

And I'll add, “And have been baptized in lemon juice!”

Spurgeon

### APPLICATION

The church in Macedonia reflected this choice of joy despite their circumstances. Paul writes about them to the Corinthians:

**2 Corinthians 8:2 – They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity.**

Or how about the prophet Habakkuk's choice:

**Hab 3:17-18 NKJV – Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls– Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.**

Perhaps most importantly, the example of Christ who suffered and endured the grief and pain of the cross, **“For the joy set before Him.” (Hebrews 12)**

#### QUOTE

**“ Rejoicing is when the joy of the Lord that is in us is expressed out of us.**

Pastor Josh

## 3 Joy Must be Guarded

### A - THE THIEF OF IDOLATRY

How many people are not joyful or don't have joy that lasts because they are trying to source their joy in all the wrong things?

**Not all joys are equal. Almost as quickly as the world gives you a pleasure, that pleasure leaks out.**

- EXAMPLE: Pouring water on a towel. It loses most of the water and is left with a damp residue that serves as a fading memory.

- As soon as a moment occurs, it transforms into a memory. Moments pass, memories fade, and the happiness, joy, and gladness they brought fade along with them.

***But there is a joy that can sustain a person through the entirety of life and through every circumstance because it's anchored in an unchanging reality.***

## BIBLE PASSAGE

### Rich young Ruler

**[Mat 19:20-22 NKJV] [20] The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" [21] Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." [22] But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.**

The very thing he thought would bring him joy was the very thing that brought him sorrow because it was the one thing that kept him from following Jesus, the only source of true joy.

## QUOTE

**“*Worldly happiness fluctuates with our circumstances, but a joy that is rooted in the Lord is a constant fountain that no worldly trouble can hinder.*”**

Pastor Josh

## B - THE THIEF OF UNREPENTANT SIN

**[Psa 51:8, 12 NKJV] [8] Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. ... [12] Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.**

**QUOTE**

**“ When we choose to hold on to things that belong at the cross, those *things* will always become *thieves*.**

Pastor Josh

**C. THE THIEF OF HOPELESSNESS**

**The two disciples on the road to Emmaus:**

**[Luk 24:17 NKJV] [17] And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"**

**Mary and Mary Magdalene:**

**[Mat 28:5-8 NKJV] [5] But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. [6] "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. [7] "And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." [8] So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.**

**APPLICATION**

How often do the circumstances of life make us feel as though everything is hopeless. The job you wanted didn't work out; the disease you never thought you'd have is knocking at your door...

You have a sinking suspicion that life is short, death is around your corner, and you're not sure what happens next...

The beauty of Jesus arriving is that he brings with Him hope! But it's not a dying hope, or an uncertain hope.

**[1Pe 1:3-4 NKJV] [3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4] to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,**

### **C - THE THIEF OF UNBELIEF**

**[Luk 19:41-42 NKJV] [41] Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, [42] saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.**

### **APPLICATION**

One of the saddest things anyone can do is harden their hearts to the reality of Jesus and the invitation he offers.