

Phil. 2:1-18

Title: Joy Junkers

Intro:

Spring of 2005, I was just finishing my second year of college and I was serving as one of the officer for Campus Crusades for Christ.

I had been a Christian for several years at that point...but some would question how much I looked the part because of my appearance; I confess to having black, blonde, red, blue, and even green hair at times. I had two eyebrow dumbbell piercings, I had earring double gauged and I had the cartilage in one of my ear pierce

Yet Sister Bobbi Jo saw something in me and asked me to be on the officers board.

About halfway through the spring, the faculty leader of our group, Bobbi Jo, spoke up in our weekly officer meeting and said, "There is a thief among us..."; and I thought "Great I'm new to the group, not from around here like everyone else and I look like this...they are going to think it's me!".

So, even though I hadn't taken anything from anyone I started getting uncomfortable because I felt I would be wrongly accused...and about that time Bobbi Jo said, "And he has stolen something from each of us."

Now my mindset went from, "They are going to think it's me" to "OK...who took something from me! I don't know what you took, but I'm going to hurt you when I find out who and what!"

So, with everyone eye balling everyone else Bobbi Jo then said, "He has stolen our joy, our peace, our happiness...it's the devil, and he has come to steal, kill and destroy."

That really got our attention, because she was right.

We were tired, it had been a long year up to that point, mid-terms were coming up and had just finished putting on a large function...and the devil was stealing our joy. This fact was playing itself out in who we were treating each other and the ministry.

Trans: Jesus said in John 10:10 *“The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy”* and I’m convinced one of the things he enjoys taking from us as believers the most is our joy.

We lose our joy and sometimes we try to replace it with happiness (remember, as a result of luck and circumstances, and is only temporary)...or we just don’t bother to replace it at all.

You know what I’m talking about, you walk into some churches and you think the sign should say First Frigidaire.

The entire front row of the choir loft sits there stone faced, which is good because it distracts you from seeing the back row that is half asleep.

And rather than shining the blessed Gospel light, they are sitting on their blessed assurance and standing on the premises...looking like the baptismal is filled with bad vinegar.

The enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy.

Do you believe that?

Transition:

We began a new series last week called “Fall into Joy”, a study of Paul’s letter to the Philippians, a book that is over flowing with joy.

Last week we learned what it means to have joy and how we can have joy simply by the way we view God, others and ourselves.

I gave you an acronym to last week to help you remember how to find joy.. Do we remember? Jesus first, Others second, and you last.

This week I want us to consider those things that can take our joy from us.

I call them “Joy Junkers”, because for one...it sounds catchy.

And two, that is what they do; they kind of just throw our joy away and tosses it to the side like garbage.

So this morning I want us to consider what those are, but first let’s read a portion of chapter 2 of this great book of scripture.

Read Phil 2:1-18 and pray.

Trans: The Apostle Paul tells us of 3 “Joy Junkers” that we can run into in our lives and can steal our joy.

What are they?

The first joy junker...

1. Wrong Priorities

*Read verse 3*

“Rivalry and conceit” are by products of selfishness.

I’m not sure if you are aware of this or not, but humans have a problem with being selfish.

Yeah...I know, shocking, huh?

But not really...because all you have to do is go back to the beginning to see this.

Adam and Eve...Eve thought the fruit looked good to her (in spite of what God said); as did Adam.

And when they realized what they did, they tried to blame someone else (not my fault!)

The next thing we know Cain and Abel are on the scene and Cain murders Abel out of what...jealousy.

Basically a sibling rivalry gone bad.

And that is one of the things Paul warns us against in *verse 3*...q competition against one another.

We need to remember that we aren't competing against each other in this congregation; we may not always agree or see eye to eye; but we are not in competition with each other.

The worst thing that can ever happen in a congregation of believers is for politics to take hold and people start campaigning against each other.

Then you have the people in this camp lead by this personality against the people in that camp lead by that personality...and we forget who the church belongs to.

Do you remember who that is?

Read Matt. 16:13-18.

*13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"*

*14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

*15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"*

*16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*

*17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I*

*tell you that you are Peter] and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*

This is not my church.

It is not the boards church.

It is not this committee or that family's church.

It is Christ's church...and by His grace alone He has allowed us to be part of this congregation so that we can reach our community with the life changing Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Also know that we are not competing against the church down the road.

If your faith is in Christ alone for your salvation...then we are on the same team.

If the church down the road or across town or in the next county or state preaches that salvation can only come by grace through faith alone...we are on the same team.

When we fight, we're not fighting each other...we're fighting the kingdom of God.

And a big reason for that is the conceit that Paul mentions.

Our focus of attention is on ourselves way too much.

If there were to be a song that I think would best describe our society today, it would be Toby Keith's "I wanna talk about me"...do you know it?

I wanna talk about me

Wanna talk about I

Wanna talk about number one

Oh my me my

What I think, what I like, what I know, what I want, what I see

Scripture says that this self-centered “I” mindset only takes away our joy.

It is a matter of be egocentric rather than exocentric.

Ego...I

Exo...Out

We are told how to be exocentric rather than egocentric starting in **vs. 5.**

Jesus is our example.

He gave up all that He had for you.

Jesus was selfless...are you?

Selfishness, the wrong priority is a joy junker.

Also see that a joy junker is a...

## 2. Wrong Proclamation

***Read verse 14***

They were advised to not be known for their grumbling and disputing.

Whether you are fighting God and fighting each other...guess what?

God hates them both.

First of all...grumbling.

To grumble means to utter sounds or words indistinctly or with a low voice and with the lips partly closed in discontent.

Any of us how have kids know what grumbling is...

Paul also made a similar statement to the Corinthian church,

*1 Cor. 10:10. "And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel."*

As a Jew he understood how God felt about this type of activity, knowing the story of the Children of Israel...and he made reference to that story in that verse.

Read Numbers (Took place about 1450 years before Christ) 16:1-12...go to vs. 28-33.

*1 Korah son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and certain Reubenites—Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—became insolent 2 and rose up against Moses. With them were 250 Israelite men, well-known community leaders who had been appointed members of the council. 3 They came as a group to oppose Moses and Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! The whole community is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is with them. Why then do you set yourselves above the Lord's assembly?"*

*4 When Moses heard this, he fell facedown. 5 Then he said to Korah and all his followers: "In the morning the Lord will show who belongs to him and who is holy, and he will have that person come near him. The man he chooses he will cause to come near him. 6 You, Korah, and all your followers are to do this: Take censers 7 and tomorrow put burning coals and incense in them before the Lord. The man the Lord chooses will be the one who is holy. You Levites have gone too far!"*

*8 Moses also said to Korah, "Now listen, you Levites! 9 Isn't it enough for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the rest of the Israelite community and brought you near himself to do the work at the Lord's tabernacle and to stand before the community and minister to them? 10 He has brought you and all your fellow Levites near himself, but now you are trying to get the priesthood too. 11 It is against the Lord that you and all your followers have banded together. Who is Aaron that you should grumble against him?"*

*12 Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab. But they said, "We will not come!..."*

*28 Then Moses said, "This is how you will know that the Lord has sent me to do all these things and that it was not my idea: 29 If these men die a natural death and suffer the fate of all mankind, then the Lord has not sent me. 30 But if the Lord brings about something totally new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with everything that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the realm of the dead, then you will know that these men have treated the Lord with contempt."*

*31 As soon as he finished saying all this, the ground under them split apart 32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households, and all those associated with Korah, together with their possessions. 33 They went down alive into the realm of the dead, with everything they owned; the earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community.*

You see, their "issue" was against Moses, but in reality it was against the one that called Moses into leadership.

And we forget about that...if we fight God's ordained and God's called, we are fighting God.

And to get the attention off ourselves and onto the person or leader we have a problem with, we grumble.

We utter things under our breathe, or in secret...so that the attention doesn't go on the grumbler but on the one being grumbled about.

But what does God think of it?

He hates it...and He will punish those who commit this grievous offense.

- Preacher, are you saying that if I gripe and complain about the direction someone is taking with the church, God is going to kill me?
- No, I'm not saying that...but if you are willing to risk it, you may want to study the Scriptures a bit more.



I do know this though...grumbling and fighting steals joy.

The joy is already missing from the life of the person who starts the grumbling and that action will suck it from those who are pulled into it.

Add to that the fact that it sucks the joy clear out of the church body...wow, why would someone do it?

But it happens.

How about this, you have a problem...instead of working the phones or taking it to your confidant; take it to God.

Leave it in His hands so that we can all be about what God honors, which is building his kingdom.

Wrong priorities and wrong proclamation are joy junkers, but also see that...

3. Wrong Profits are joy junkers also.

Read verse 16

*“as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.”*

We are advised not to run in vain and to labor for nothing.

If we are doing anything short of building God’s kingdom for His greater glory and His honor alone; we are running in vain and laboring for nothing.

Jesus addressed this in *Mark 8:34-37*.

*34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.*

*36 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? 37 Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?*

What does it profit a man...

There are some...maybe in here maybe online, both born again believers and pre-Christians who are running in vain and laboring for nothing.

For the pre-Christian, you might be trying to earn your way to God...being good enough to be accepted and hopefully saved; I've got news for you, you can quit!

You can never be good enough.

All of our righteousness (good works) are like filthy rags according to Isaiah 64:6.

Or maybe you aren't too worried about this God stuff, after all, he who dies with the most toys wins, right?

Wrong again!

He who dies with the most toys still dies...and you can't take it with you.

I hate to break it to you but in the end...it's all gonna burn.

It won't last.

So why not stop running in vain and laboring for nothing today!

*2 Cor. 6:2 says, "Now is the time of God's favor, this is the day of salvation."*

You are promised here and now...that is it; why not take advantage of it?

Why not place your faith in Christ today?

And for the born again believers who are here this morning and fall into the category of running in vain and laboring for nothing...and I do believe that is possible, otherwise Paul would not have written about this to the believers at Philippi.

Are you not doing what God wants you to do?

Are you living the purpose God has called you to, which is to know Him and make Him known?

ILLUS: It's a little like being stuck in a muddy rut, you just spin your tires going no where and causing damage.

### **Closing:**

Is that you this morning?

Are the wrong profits taking your joy?

Wrong proclamations?

Or maybe wrong priorities?

Conclusion: I mentioned John 10:10 at the beginning, speaking of the enemy stealing our joy; did you know that there is a 2nd part to that verse?

Jesus said, "The enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy; but I have come to give life and life more abundantly."

I'm going to start with the born again believers this morning: has your joy been stolen?

Now for those who are not yet born again believers: What is keeping you from accepting that gift of life and life more abundantly?

If you are here or watching online and you are thinking I have lost or never found my joy. Just remember....Jesus first, others second, you last.

In a world filled with hopelessness and an extreme lack of joy, we who have the joy of Christ have the responsibility to share that joy with other. Have you shared that joy this week with anyone?

Did you invite anyone to church so that they can find that joy?

Let us pray