2 True Joy and Salvation
Talk 2

Overview: The Bible repeatedly in both Old and New Testaments links joy, true joy, with salvation, which includes a right relationship with God in His redemptive work. This implies that there is no true joy outside of God and outside of a right relationship with God. Any attempt to reach for and achieve true joy outside of God is either false or temporary.

Scripture: Psalm 13:5; 9:14; 51:8-12; Isaiah 12:2-3; 35:10; 61:1-3

Brief Explanation of True Joy and Salvation: True joy comes from God's salvation in the life of the believer. True joy becomes the hallmark of those who know they are saved and see their salvation for the true value that it is. True joy in salvation becomes the weapon by which the hurting Christian can see the light of joy in the darkest of nights, and with which we can fight for our joy in Christ. The Scripture becomes the LIGHT that shines on our path (See Psalm 119:105, 107, 130).

True Joy and Salvation:

1. Salvation produces true joy because it actualizes the human faculty for joy.
    a. God made the human soul to experience and exist in joy; this joy is fundamentally linked to God and cannot be experienced outside of joy. But sinfulness and sin remove the joy that is available to us, and our sin nature removes our capacity to rejoice in truth, in God, and in higher realities. Sin warps our human fabric so that we do not take joy in God and all His good gifts. However, when the Lord saves the sinner in regeneration by His gracious operation in the life and ministry of the Holy Spirit, there is a rebirth to life as God created us to experience it. This includes a rebirth of joy, joy in the Lord and joy in all righteousness and love. Therefore, holy joy (if we may call the joy of salvation) becomes the platform or foundation on which we relate to all of life. This means that our understanding of the very nature of our lives is essentially and organically linked to and understood in the life of Jesus Christ, which is the existence of joy.

2. Salvation produces true joy because it enables the believer to draw joy from God, who is the most joyful being in the universe.
    a. At the heart of joy in salvation is the idea of God being totally and absolutely joyful. God is love, and joy and love are connected in the most intimate way. Therefore, the very nature of joy, true joy, is to know the joy of God. Salvation in Christ is God's plan to redeem the human race, and it is in Christ that this predetermined plan is achieved through Christ's saving work on the cross. As a necessary manifestation of new birth, the believer begins to live in the joy of God and in His saving work in Christ. The saved person has a new heart and a new mind, because we have a new life. This fulfills the promise of God in Ezekiel 36:26-27. This is also described in 1 John 5:3. The joy the believer possesses in Christ is a communicable aspect of God's joy.

3. Salvation produces true joy because it removes the destructive elements of sin.
    a. As a matter of operation, salvation brings true joy into the human mind and heart, because it conquers sin in the believer's life. Wherever sin goes, sadness, pain, and death go also. The only way to remove the effects of sin is through salvation. Salvation's work on sin can be considered from many different sides, including justification (a change in God's perspective of the believer on the basis of Christ's substitutionary atonement), but it can

also be seen in its work in sanctification, which is a process that removes sin's dominating power (Romans 6:14) and it replaces sin's vile and ugly effect with peace and life (Romans 8:6b). Salvation not only removes the dominion and conquering power of sin, but it changes the soul whereby sin's heaviness no longer destroys the heart's delight in God and the truths of God. Now in Christ there is no fear of judgment (Romans 8:1), but only a joyful anticipation of Christ's second coming and our homegoing to heaven.

Counsel: How can the believer fight against life's sorrow and sadness with the joy of salvation?

1. The believer must have a good understanding and strong conviction about the nature, application, and meaning of salvation in Jesus Christ.

2. It is important for the believer to nurture joy in Christ in the context of salvation all through life. This involves personal devotions, formal theological and biblical study of salvation, and worshiping God with the joy of salvation.

3. When life's pain comes, flee to Christ with salvation guiding you.
    a. Some pain in life is so great that we are unable to maintain emotional balance. This is natural and normal in many ways, but this should not become the lens through which we see life, see God, or live. It is important to acknowledge pain without allowing pain to define and dominate you.

    b. Flee to truth in the Bible and soak your heart in biblical truths regarding your salvation. Focus your mind and heart on the gifts of God given to you by His grace in salvation. Some of which may be considered as the following:

        i. Forgiveness
        ii. Spiritual healing (1 Peter 2:24)
        iii. Justification before God the Father and cessation of divine wrath (Romans 8:1)
        iv. The life of Christ (eternal life) as an eternal gift to us
        v. Sanctification and becoming more and more like Christ through the Holy Spirit
        vi. The constant love of God and His providential care for us
        vii. The promise of our heavenly home, glorification, and eternal joy in heaven

    c. Flee to Christ in view of the gospel truth. Nurture your friendship and fellowship with Christ. Develop intimacy and closeness with Jesus in prayer and honest sharing. Seek His will, His glory, and His pleasure in your life, knowing that His joy is yours, and you cannot have joy without His joy in you.

4. Live in the light of God's promises, though your experience is shadowed by human frailty and weakness, wait upon the Lord, and focus your attention on Christ's mediation, provision, and the prepared home for you in heaven.
    a. Be content with Christ and His promises to you.
    b. Live obediently, lovingly, and humbly, willing to repent and make course corrections.
    c. Invest your love, expectations, and joys in Christ and His kingdom, which is eternal.

5. In the Body of Christ, the church, seek to be a blessing to others aiding them to look to Christ and His saving work as their joy. Be a friend to help another see the true joy of God's saving work in Christ.