

Calvary Protestant Evangelical Free Church

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CALVARY CHRONICLE

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IRREVOCABLE JOY!

“You have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.” John 16:22

“No one will take your joy from you.” These words were not words of man, but are words from God. This is not a statement I made up to make you feel good. They are taken out of God’s Word. If they make you feel good, that’s God’s idea, not just mine. **“No one will take your joy from you.”** This is the promise of IRREVOCABLE JOY.

We are very fragile. Not much is sure, firm, or solid in our lives. That is why these words from Jesus are very precious. **“No one will take your joy from you.”** You’ve heard of unconditional guarantees - warranties that seem too good to be true. Have you ever heard of any product that says: “In this you will find pleasure and no one will take your pleasure from you.” If you read that on some box or bottle, you would smirk and call it marketing hoopla.

But that’s what Jesus says. Your world may come “a tumbling down,” all your money be lost, and your dreams be dashed, but, “no one will take your joy from you.” How can this be? How can such a massive claim stand when the biggest things in our world are utterly uncertain and unstable? Let’s look at these words to make sure we understand them and how it can be that Jesus can guarantee our joy with such amazing absoluteness.

Jesus is speaking to his disciples on the night before he was killed. He is trying to help them understand what is just in front of them. In verse 16 he says, ***“A little while, and you will see me no more; again a little while, and you will see me.”*** The disciples are confused by this and in verses 17-18 they discuss with each other what in the world he means by a little while they won’t see him, and then in a little while they will.

Jesus knows they are confused and baffled, and so he says in verse 20, ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.”*** What is he referring to? He’s referring to his death, when the disciples will have a deep and anguished sense of loss; and his resurrection, when their sorrow will become joy (John 20:20).

In verse 21 he compares what is about to happen to him and to the disciples, with a woman in childbirth. For a little while there is sorrow as a very painful loss occurs - the baby that has been so close, so secure, and so comfortable, is cast out in a painful, bloody birth. But again, “in a little while” the pain is past and the loss is not really a loss at all, but an amazing gain. The child is not lost, but present in a way that can now go on and on.

So it will be with Jesus. “In a little while” he will be lost in a painful, bloody crucifixion. There will be weeping, lamenting, and fear in the disciples. But Jesus says, look at it like a birth. The child must be lost from the warmth of the womb to be gained as a person in the world. Yes, I am dying. Yes, it will be painful for you. But, “in a little while” you will see me again, and your sorrow will become joy. It’s like what he said in John 12:24, ***“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”*** You lose me in one sense, but gain me in one far greater.

So when we come to verse 22, we know what Jesus has in mind, his death and resurrection. He says, ***“So you have sorrow now.”*** And he means that his death is just around the corner, and the loss and pain will be great for his friends. Then he says, ***“But I will see you again.”*** That is, I will rise from the dead. And I will come to you. I will seek you out. (Note: after saying three times in verses 16,17,19 “you will see me,” he says in verse 22, “I will see you.”)

(continued on next page)

Then he says, "your hearts will rejoice." That's just what happened. It says in John 20:20, that on the first day of the week, the day Jesus rose from the dead, he came to them and *"he showed them his hands and his side."* Then John says, *"Then the disciples WERE GLAD when they saw the Lord."* So Jesus' prediction in John 16:22 came true. *"I will see you again and YOUR HEARTS WILL REJOICE."*

Then come the amazing words that we are focusing on, **"And no one will take away your Joy from you."** This Joy is Irrevocable Joy. It cannot be destroyed. It cannot be lost. It is sure, firm, solid, and certain even if everything around our soul gives way. This joy will not.

Why not? That's the key question: How can Jesus make such an unparalleled guarantee unlike anything in this world? Let's look at two answers from this gospel.

First, "No one will take your joy from you" because your joy comes from being with Jesus, and the resurrection of Jesus means that Jesus will never die again; he will never be cut off from you.

He says, "I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice." **This text doesn't offer any guarantees to people who don't enjoy being with Jesus.** If Jesus says to you, "I will see you again," and your heart does not rejoice in being with him, then this text is not a promise for you - it's an invitation. It's an invitation to love Jesus. Because if you don't enjoy Jesus, your joy will be taken from you. **Jesus is the only permanent joy.**

Notice the sequence of thoughts in verse 22: *"I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice."* Why will they rejoice? Because Jesus will be with them again. Then it says, *"No one will take your joy from you."* What joy can never be taken away? Joy at being with Jesus. That's the joy that's guaranteed forever. No other joy. If you don't have that, the joy you do have is very fragile and uncertain indeed. So this text is an invitation to people whose joy is mainly in money, success, family, hobbies, being liked, games or sports, or church. It's an invitation to see Jesus as the only joy that lasts forever. "I will see you again and your heart will rejoice." Forever!

And why will he last forever? Because he has been raised from the dead and will never be cut off from us again. He defeated death. Now he lives forever and has the keys of death in his own hands. So when he says, "No one will take your joy from you," he means, I will be your joy, and I can never die again, and therefore your joy will never die. As long as I exist in my resurrection life, that's how long your joy in me will be. No one can take it from you, because it is joy in me, and I will live for ever and ever.

That's the first answer to the question how Jesus can make such an amazing guarantee. Our joy is in being

with Jesus, and because of the resurrection, he will never be cut off from us again.

The other reason is this: "No one will take your joy from you" because your joy comes from being with Jesus, and the resurrection of Jesus means that YOU will never die; you will never be cut off from him.

You see, two things have to be true if your joy is never to be taken from you. One is that the source of your joy lasts forever, and the other is that you last forever. **If either you or the source of your joy is mortal, your joy will be taken from you.**

How so many people have settled for just that. Eat, drink, and be merry they say, for tomorrow we die, and that's that. Food doesn't last forever, and I don't last forever. Let's make the most of it while we can. What a tragedy!

If you are tempted to think that way, consider that if your joy were in being with Jesus, "no one would take your joy from you" - not in this life, nor in the life to come.

For two reasons: One, Jesus will never die again. And the other, because you will never die. Look at John 14:18,19. Jesus says, *"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also."*

"Because I live, you will live also." The resurrection of Jesus means that not only will he live forever as the source of our joy, but you will live forever if he is the source of your joy.

Jesus said to Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, *"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."* (John 11:25 26)

The two great reasons why "no one will take your joy from you" are, that Jesus, the source of joy, will never die; and those who have Jesus as the source of their joy, will never die.

Some may say, "But Christians do die." Yes, in one sense we do. But, not in the most important sense, namely, the joy that a believer has in being with Jesus is never broken. Not life or death, or angels or principalities, or things present or things to come.

So I commend Jesus to you. If he is not the joy of your heart, he wants to be. He says in John 6:35, *"I am the bread of life, he who comes to me shall not hunger and he who believes in me shall never thirst."* NEVER! An unbroken line of satisfaction in Jesus from now to eternity.

This is the word of the risen Jesus to us - to all of us who will take him as our joy! **You will see me . . . and your hearts will rejoice, and NO ONE WILL TAKE YOUR JOY FROM YOU.**

CELEBRATING THE EASTER SEASON!

PALM SUNDAY

Sunday, March 28th



GOOD FRIDAY

Friday, April 2nd

Service at the church at 7:30 p.m.
Communion will be held.



EASTER / RESURRECTION SUNDAY

Sunday, April 4th

Two services: 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

The service will be recorded and uploaded to the church website and YouTube.



As Easter approaches, let us prayerfully forget what is behind and say goodbye to what is called the "new normal," and let us begin to press on towards our goal of living a new life in Jesus Christ.

The Sermon of the Lilies



In the beauty of the lilies
We can see the love of God.
They without a conscious effort
Rise - supreme above the sod -
Clothed in tints of radiant glory
Fed by springs and from above.
Each a message of Creation,
Each a symbol of his love.

by Charles L. H. Wagner

Church Updates

Calvary Church continues to have two worship services on Sunday: **9:30 a.m. service (held downstairs); and 11:00 a.m. service (held upstairs in the sanctuary).**

Children's Church meets via Zoom Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. The children are studying the life of Christ.

Wednesday Night Bible Study meets at the church each week at 7:00 p.m. The men and women are studying from the book of John I, and also have a time of prayer.

Ladies Bible Study meets the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month via Zoom at 7:30 p.m. The ladies are studying the book of Acts.

SENIORS MEALS ON WHEELS

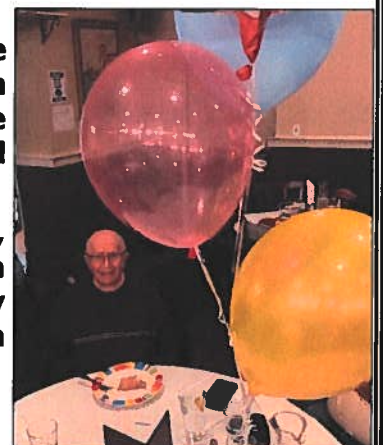
Since the April Seniors Luncheon could not be held at the church, we offered to bring a cooked meal to them. On Tuesday, March 30th, Ralph prepared a delicious pork loin dinner along with sides. There were 28 packaged meals that were either picked up or delivered to their doorstep.



Just so happens it was Carmine Dapice's birthday that day. When the meals were delivered, a candle was lit for him to make a wish and also blow out.

Later that day he and Mary Jo, Pastor Charlie and Barbara, and a few others from the church family went out for a dinner celebration in his honor.

Happy Birthday Carmine!



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Baldwin, NY 11510

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BIRTHDAYS

APRIL

3rd Abbie Wong
5th Samantha Seymour
7th Debbie Porter
13th Howard Brockway
14th Leah Nicolich
15th Barbara Johnson
16th Barbara Grant
17th Ree Kelting
20th Rose Nembhard
21st Mary Jo Dapice
21st Joe Fazzino
22nd Maryann Brockway
22nd Sotar Lloyd
24th Carter Miller
24th Rosemary Rotolo
27th Karen Linhart

MAY

4th Laura Seymour
4th Kaia Waldvogel
6th Mike Senita
10th Bob Bennett
10th Dawn Manuel
11th Jonathan Linhart
11th Alicia Seymour
12th Nancy Bennett
13th Reed Waldvogel
17th Pat Watts
18th Caleb Nehring
21st Wes Carman
29th Barbara Hindley
30th Dianne Chalavoutis-
Miller

Happy Birthday!

ANNIVERSARIES

APRIL

12th Greg & Susan (Deedy) Mahoney
26th Charles & Evelyn Barnes

MAY

3rd Ralph & Bonnie Rose
9th David & Dawn Manuel
21st Charlie & Trudy Hetzel
24th Lou & Colleen Arena
28th Chris & Melissa Watts
30th David & Christy Senita

