



Week Four Prayer Focus – Jesus’ Passion – Joy!

Just Pray: Ask the Father to open our eyes to see the Lord Jesus, to help us embrace the passion and mission that He has entrusted to us, and teach us to pray in Jesus’ Name, with His faith, until we know the unending joy that comes from the Father answering our prayers!

Jesus’ Passion

When was the last time you felt deeply, persistently passionate about something? How many less important things faded into the background of your pursuits? Did you forget to eat? Did you mind going without sleep? Did you spend time, money, energy, and resources, forgetting the expense as though it barely cost you anything? What changed over time that caused that passion to fade? The Lord Jesus tells us that the worries of the world, the deceitful glamor of wealth, and the desire for other things can push into our hearts and choke out the word of God so that our lives are unfruitful (Mark 4). However, as with any garden that is eventually overrun by useless thorns and weeds, the drift away from focus can gradually send our lives off course and into dullness, boredom, sleepiness, and dead ends.

When Jesus’ disciples see Him, touch His hands and see the spear wound in His side, they are filled with joy! (John 20:19-23.) There before them stands a human being, the promised Messiah, who was definitely dead, but is alive again forever! The implications radically change their lives and focus from that day on. Jesus then outlines for them the purpose of their lives – to take up His mission, the mission given to Him by His Father. So, what is Jesus’ passion? One way to express it might be: Jesus’ passion is to do the will of His Father (Psalm 40:7-8; see also Hebrews 10). So thoroughly devoted to this end is He, that He left the glory and privileges of Heaven, confined Himself in a physical body forever, carried the filthy sins of the whole world for all time, then went to hell and back to finish it! And what is the ultimate joy on the other side of doing His Father’s will? The purchase with His blood, for Himself of a pure, radiant, **powerful** Bride!

Conversation Starters with Jesus

As we continue pursuing rest and peace in Jesus’ presence, ask the Holy Spirit to help you see more and more that you are in fact Jesus’ passion and joy! (John 17:24.)

Are there worries or desires that dissipate your focus and dull your passion for Jesus’ mission to radically change your life?

Is it a surprising thought to you that your passionate pursuit of the Father's will for your life will end in you having your highest joy?

When you think of the Bride of Christ, do you think of her as being powerful? Why or why not?

There is Always More – The Ever-Increasing, Never-Ending Kingdom

Are you satisfied with your walk with the Lord Jesus and your progress in becoming more and more like Him? I'm not, and this excites me! The Bible makes bold claims: we can continually go from faith to faith (Romans 1:16-17), from strength to strength (Psalm 84:6-7), and from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:17-18). God promises us Jesus' government and peace will increase without end (Isaiah 9:6-7). And even more startling is the promise that Jesus will share rulership of His Kingdom with those of us who are set apart for God and made holy by His blood (Daniel 7:13-27; Revelation 5:10). We are to be kings and priests who reign on the earth! In every season and circumstances, there is always more possible – infinitely more – in our walk with Jesus Messiah.

Jesus gives us a picture of this abundance, our joint-inheritance and shared authority with Him, in the parable of the lost son. The story is about two lost sons, really, neither of whom have ever come to know their perfectly loving, generous Father. Even though the wayward son squanders all his share of the Father's wealth, when he returns, his Father shockingly restores all due to him as a son – including the signet ring that gives him access to all the Father possesses! When the older, dutiful son protests and reveals his belief the Father has been stingy with him, his Father confirms the truth: "Son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours." The party he grudgingly accuses his Father of denying him, he could have had it any time, all along! (See Luke 15:11-32.) How may we access the wealth of our Father's Kingdom? How may we extend the government and peace of the Kingdom of the Prince of Peace in our lives and world today? Just pray. Yes, it is the Father's desire to fill us with joy to overflowing by answering our prayers!

Conversation Starters with Jesus

Ask the Father to show you from His perspective how He sees you, and what is the "more" He desires for your life in this season.

What difference would it make in your prayer life if you saw yourself permanently clothed in Jesus' royal robes, with His shoes of authority on your feet, and His signet ring unlocking heaven's resources on your hand?

What if you lived and spoke as if Jesus' words in your mouth, were as powerful as Jesus' words in Jesus' mouth?