

"Choosing Fun Over Drudgery."  
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## **Introduction**

When I worship God, I want to experience joy and transformation that lead me to move forward in my faith. The joy of the Lord is our strength, and it is essential to live out our faith with a positive attitude and spirit of collaboration.

Church is a place to collaborate with others with a humble heart of love, have fun and a good time enjoying God's company, and experience the friendship of my church members.

The church is a place to enjoy and have a time of refreshment. As an ordained minister, I feel so blessed to have the opportunity to develop my profession in an atmosphere of joy and positive energy, taking the challenges of life and ministry, sometimes even with a sense of humor. All of this reminds me of a story. There was a Church where the pastor and the music director were not getting along. This spirit began to spill over into the worship service as time went by. The first week the preacher shared a message on being flexible and open to God's leading. The music director led the song, **"I Shall Not be Moved."**

In the second week, the preacher preached on tithing and how we all should gladly give to the work of the Lord. The music director led the song, **"Jesus Paid It All."**

The third week the preacher spoke on gossiping and how we should all watch our tongues. The music director led **"I Love to Tell the Story."**

With all of this going on, the preacher became totally disgusted over the situation and the following Sunday told the congregation that he was considering resigning. The music director led **"Oh, Why Not Tonight."** As it came to pass, the pastor did resign.

The following week he informed the church that it was Jesus who led him there, and it was Jesus who was taking him away. The music leader led the song, **"What a Friend We Have in Jesus."** Yes, many times joy of God in our hearts makes us take to most difficult experiences with a divine sense of humor!

### **The Bible Passages**

In today's Bible passage, we can see that people of faith could face problematic situations, trials, and challenges but let's recall what the word of God says. Our Church consultant Paul Nixon shared that the Bible is a joyful book and Christianity is an exuberant and happy faith. In the reading from Habakkuk, we can see the trust and joy of the author amid trouble. He poetically compares himself to a deer treading on the heights to express the confidence that God will indeed bring about the promised deliverance.

In the reading from Philippians, the author encourages us to rejoice in the Lord.

His appeal is based on the faith and confidence of the believer that through God's presence, we can overcome the challenges of life. We can even solve our differences with a spirit of gentleness, meaning that the joy of God is a powerful resource not only to enjoy life in an isolated way, but also to experience a transformative dimension of spiritual development and interactions with people.

In a simple word, I can say that the believer that enjoys God's presence can live a life that expresses happiness and can be nice to everyone.

The sum of all people's joy can bring a powerful atmosphere of joy and positive energy to our church. We can have fun when we gather to worship Jesus and do ministry in our community. Do you know how many people want to be part of a church where joy and fun are a constant reality in every worship service and gathering?

A joyful attitude has everything to do with the spiritual life of its members who express God's presence in all church ministries and activities.

### **Theological Reflection**

How important it is to keep the joy of God in our lives and choose fun over drudgery! Even when the challenges and hard moments of our existence are potent factors that rise to confront our faith! Two beloved members of our congregation passed away during the last weeks, Lee Kline and Jim Agnew. Both of them were faithful members of our congregation.

As I was working with the families about the memorial services, I noticed that each of these individuals dedicated time and energy to serving and collaborating with a positive and joyful attitude within our beloved congregation.

Lee Kline spent hours in the churchyards, planting and working hard to make them a nice and beautiful place to enjoy. He planted trees and flowers. He took care of the embellishment of the church exterior, producing life and taking care of the plants.

But Lee didn't do this complaining. He enjoyed his work for God. He was a happy Christian. He gladly served his beloved Church with positive energy.

Jim Agnew dedicated many years to our Church. He was part of the renovation project of First Church more than 20 years ago. Jim worked closely with the ministers at that time.

He spent time with architects, designers, contractors, and workers to make this place a lovely building dedicated to God to serve our community here in Des Moines.

I saw an article in the Des Moines Register about our church renovation project with Jim Agnew in the picture, and he looked cool and happy!

His excellent work and positive attitude are now reflected in the beauty of this building.

Both of these persons are excellent models to follow! We can imitate their service and collaboration with joy and positive energy!

### **Conclusion.**

May God helps us and guide us to come and worship Jesus with the same attitude.

May we all have joy and fun collaborating with our Church in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ for everyone! I have learned that a joyful attitude in Church has nothing to do with the worship style. It isn't about contemporary versus traditional worship services.

It's about joy and positive energy that we can only have if we let God live in us and transform our lives! Today, God is calling us to enjoy God's presence in our lives and in our Church! I have a lot of resources and ideas about experiencing our Christian life in a joyful and fun way in our Church. But at this time, I want to invite you to send

your ideas and your thoughts through our YouTube channel, Facebook live streaming, and our web page.

If the joy of the Lord is our strength, let's all collaborate to make our Church a place of joy, a pleasant and appropriate atmosphere where people can find God, and a church that welcomes everyone with a joyful heart.

Amen!