

“Enjoying God and the Life He’s Giving You”

May 31, 2026 | Justin Lanham

Well, hey, Valley Creek Church, how we doing? Hey, it's so good to see all of you. Before we jump in, can we just welcome all of our campuses? Whether you're joining us in Gainesville, Denton, Lewisville, Flower Mound, or online. We are so glad that you're here with us this summer. My name is Justin and I get to serve as the Director of Valley Creek College, also known as VC College, also known as the greatest college of all time. Because our students don't just earn degrees, they're developed into whole people. Like they get to discover who they are, who God is, what they're created to do, and they don't just know it, they act as if it were so. And so it's been a great season of VC College as we're creating this, the future. And if you've been with us, it's been a great season in our church.

We've been in a season talking about fueling the fire – the fire of God in our life, asking ourselves the question like, "How's my fire? Like how's my walk with Jesus? Do I uh shape and mold myself in His image and His likeness? Am I someone who's surrounding myself with Him? Do I smell like smoke?" And we've said ever since January, we don't want to be a gas fireplace, one that you can just flip on and off whenever you want. No, we want a real wood-burning fire – like a fire you have to tend and cultivate, a fire you have to steward, a fire that's attractive to others. And ultimately, we want a fire that produces burning hearts, radiant faces, and holy lives in Jesus' name. And so, I pray that as we come out of that conversation, that your fire is hot. And then as we step into the summer, that the temperature outside is just a representation of your fire, and that it only gets hotter and hotter in Jesus' name.

And hey, I'm excited to be with you today because today I get the honor and privilege of kicking off a brand new summer series. A series we like to refer to as, "60 Days." And if you've never been with us, you've never heard that phrase, maybe you're wondering, "60 days, what does that mean?" Well, every summer for the last few years, we've been taking the months of June and July, right around 60 days, and we've been diving into a theme from Scripture together. And so, over the years, we've had everything from 60 days of overcoming, 60 days of family, 60 days of rest, joy, and relationships, 60 days of unfamiliar promises, 60 days songs of life. And so, really, it's been more like 300 days of 60 days.

But every summer, time and time again, these series are so timely for our church. And that's because these aren't just random, arbitrary themes. These aren't just things we draw from a hat. They're not ChatGPT-generated. These aren't things we think would just be good to talk about. No, these are the things we feel like God is inviting us into together. To seek His wisdom. To hear His voice. To search His Word and to discover what He wants to say about these things. And so every year there has been such a favor on these 60 days because there's always a favor when the church seeks the Lord, hears His voice, and then follows Him wholeheartedly.

And so that's what we're going to do this summer. And I know it's summer and there's already a million things going on. So many things demanding your time and your attention, but what if

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for the next 60 days you just chose to be here? To make this a priority, to lean into what God wants to do like regardless of the to-dos, the travel, the stuff. What if you just said this summer, this series, I'm going to align myself, position myself with how God is moving because make no mistake, God is moving in our church. He's moving in our church and we want to be aligned with that movement. Because we believe that when you're aligned with that movement, that you're going to find the things you search for every single summer – things like rest and peace, things like joy and life, but unlike summer, they don't have to stop when break ends. Because unlike a lot of this world, God doesn't stop moving just because it's summer. He moves in all things, in all seasons in your life and in your family. And so this isn't a summer break from life, it's a summer break for life. Not a summer break from God, but a summer break for God to align ourselves with what He's doing because Jesus didn't come to give us a summer to the full, He came to give us a life to the full.

And so as we've been praying, as we've been asking, as we've been seeking the Lord wondering what it is that He wants to speak over our church these 60 days, we felt like He gave us a really clear direction. And so over this summer, this series, we're going to be talking about enjoying God and the life He's giving us. This summer, this series, enjoying God and the life that He's giving us. And so can I just ask you right out of the gate, is that what you're doing? Are you enjoying God? And are you enjoying the life He's giving you? And notice how it says giving. This isn't a series to reminisce, look back on the glory days. We're talking about the life He's giving you today, here, now, in this very moment. And notice how it says you, not your family, not your marriage, not that friend or that relative, but you. Are you enjoying the God life is giving you? And would others say you're enjoying God and the life He's giving you? Like do your words and your actions, does your life reflect a life of that? And I don't know what your answer to that question might be, but what I do know is that God wants to release joy into your life this season. Because deep down, we all want to enjoy God. Deep down we were created to enjoy God. Like we want to enjoy His voice and His presence and His invitation and His goodness and His mercy and we want to enjoy the life He's giving us.

We want to see life as a gift filled with gratitude, contentment, this deep sense of satisfaction, but I think if we're honest, that most of us could maybe say half of the statement is true. Like some of you, you may say in this season you're enjoying God. The two of you feel connected. You're walking in obedience, you're hearing His voice, you're in the secret place for 3 hours every single morning. The only problem is you don't really want to get out of it. Like you don't want to face the rest of your day because you just wish your life looked different. And for others, I think you're here, you're loving life. You've got great rhythms, you're making good money, different hobbies, good friendships. Your life is great. In fact, your life is so good that maybe you've forgotten how to enjoy God in the midst of it. Maybe sometimes you just even forget that He's there altogether, but that's not how you and I were created to live. Psalm 16, "You make known to me the path of life; you fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand." Come on, this is how we're created to live. On the path of life, filled with joy, enjoying God and the life that He's giving us.

And so, is this what we're doing? And if we're going to take the next 60 days talking about enjoying God and the life that He's giving us, I think it's important that we define the word enjoy. Cuz I'm sure all of us have different variations, definitions of what that word means, but if you look up the original definition of the word enjoy, it means to rejoice, to be glad, to take delight in. And the word enjoy didn't originate on its own. It actually came from the word joy. Because it's in joy that you and I get to enjoy. And so, what is joy? Well, joy is this pervasive sense of well-being. That's what joy is, this pervasive sense of well-being, meaning when I look at my life, I can say all is well – that God is good and that He's good to me.

And so, regardless of situation, of circumstance, I can rejoice. I can be glad. I can take delight in those things, and this is why joy is different than how the world defines happiness. This is why kingdom joy is different than worldly happiness. See, worldly happiness – a state of comfort. It's a state of convenience. It's a state of saying, "I'm good, therefore I'm happy." And listen, who wouldn't want that? Like, who wouldn't want life to go their way all the time?

Like who wouldn't want everything to look exactly the way that we want it to look? But maybe this is why we struggle to find joy. Because maybe we don't know how to look for it and and if we did know how to look for it, maybe we wouldn't be that interested in it because if joy means that I'm supposed to take delight in everything, like even when my preferences aren't served, even when my expectations aren't met, even when things don't go my way, then maybe I would much prefer some worldly happiness over some kingdom joy. But this is why kingdom joy is different than worldly happiness and hear me, please. At its core, there's nothing wrong with how God defines happiness. But when we let the world define happiness, it's fleeting. It's temporary. It's a feeling and so kingdom joy isn't happiness.

Because joy walks by faith; happiness walks by sight. Joy is eternal; happiness is temporary. Joy is based off truth; happiness is based off fact. And happiness is a behavior; joy is a belief. See, happiness is dependent on other people; joy is dependent on Jesus. And so at best, happiness is a shaky foundation, but joy, woo, it's a firm foundation. See, happiness can be found outside of God, but true joy can only be found within God. Why? Because it's in presence where there's fullness of joy. The joy of the Lord is my strength. I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

See, we can find happiness alone, but true joy can only be found within God. Why? Because God is joy. God is joy. But so often instead of experiencing that joy that He came to give us, we strive for these happy lives outside of God. These were my young adult years. I'd strive for happiness in everything from relationships to stuff to popularity and I'd just go from the next thing to the next thing to the next thing and instead of enjoying God and the life that He came to give me, I tried to buy the life of happiness that the world wanted to sell me. But here's the beautiful thing about joy – it can't be bought. Joy can't be bought and so as much as we may

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want to, you can't facial or vacation, video game or Roth IRA your way to joy because unlike happiness, joy can't be bought. Joy is undeserved. It's supernatural. Joy is a gift that's freely given. You can't buy it because it's already been bought. And you can't buy what Jesus already bought. Which means Satan can't steal what he didn't buy.

And so as much as you may want to or your circumstances may want to, it can't steal your joy because joy is the fruit of the spirit. And so no matter how much life takes the fruit from your tree, joy will always naturally and effortlessly grow back because when you walk in the Spirit, joy always grows back. And so joy is just another picture of God's grace, just another picture of His love. You can't buy it because it's already been bought. And so you can receive it. You can believe it. You can grab hold of it like right now. You can choose to enjoy God. You can choose to enjoy the life that He's giving you and so are you? Like are you enjoying His presence and His voice, His invitations and His love, and are you enjoying the life that He's given you? The relationships you have, the season that you're in, the work He's entrusted to you, this body of people that you belong to, or how about even the trials that you go through? You're like, I was with you all the way up there until the end, bro. Had to say the trial thing. But listen, here's just what I want to say to that – is that if you and I wait the next 60 days thinking that our joy will come when we feel as connected to God as we want to feel and our life looks exactly the way that we want it to look, you and I will never have joy. Because on this side of heaven, there will always be this side of heaven. The kingdom has come, make no mistake, but more of it is coming.

Jesus has come, but He's coming back again. And until He does, verses like this sometimes just speak to realities of life, “Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls.” Come on. Does this ever reflect your life? You ever hankering for just some sheep in the pen, some cattle in your stalls? Okay, true. “Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord. I will be joyful in God my Savior.”

Listen, even when life doesn't look the way you want it to look, you can be joyful. You can rejoice. You can be glad in it. Jesus says in this world you will have trouble, but take heart. In other words, take delight in those things. Learn how to enjoy those things because when you do, you can enjoy him. You can enjoy the life He's given you, and so are you? And I know these concepts, these principles, this theology, it's always a little easier said than done. But what I love about Scripture is that so many people, just like you, show us how to walk this out.

Y'all I had some rough brothers growing up – wrestle matches, tickle fights. They never sold me into slavery. But here was Joseph, one day doing his thing, he's sold into slavery, taken away to a faraway land. And then he's wrongfully accused and put into prison for years. And yet even in the midst of that, Joseph could still enjoy God. He could still enjoy the life He was giving him. Or how about Abraham? Abraham, someone with this deep longing, like this desire on his heart, something that hadn't yet come to fruition, but even in the midst of disappointment,

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Abraham was known for enjoying God. Known for enjoying the life He was giving him. What about David? We all know David – on the run for his life and could say things like, "God, why have You rejected me?" But then two verses later, could say, "I will go to the altar of God, to God, the source of all my," say it with me, "joy." Joy.

Even in the midst of their life not looking the way they wanted it to look, feeling as connected to God as they want to feel, they could still enjoy God. They could still enjoy the life He was giving them. Why? Because they weren't looking for joy, they were looking for God. And they all knew that when they found God, they found joy. These guys knew Matthew 6:33 before Jesus was even on this earth to speak it. That if they just seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, everything, including joy, will be given to them. And we don't just see this in Scripture, we get to see this in the lives of so many of you. We see this in the super adults, the empty nesters, who refuse to let this season define them. Yes, their bodies are getting older and older, but their souls are getting younger and younger because they believe that the best days aren't behind them, but that in Jesus' name they're ahead of them. And so they're enjoying God, and they're enjoying this life He's giving them.

We see this in students living in Babylon at school every single day. Surrounded by a culture that wants nothing to do with God, but even in the midst of persecution, ridicule, isolation, they walk in the joy of the Lord. They bless those who persecute them. Why? Because they're enjoying God. And they're enjoying this life He's giving them. Or how about the young adult longing to be married? The dad who's been waiting on that promotion, the husband and wife who've been trying for years for a family. They're not waiting on the world, they're waiting on the Lord, and as they are, He is renewing their strength. They're trusting in Him, and so they're enjoying this life and the life He's given them.

And you may be like, "Man, you're in ministry, sure you see these people. Come to my neck of the woods. I'm convinced these people don't exist." And that's because I think we believe that if they did, they'd be skipping everywhere. They'd be dancing the night away. Like Buddy the Elf, they wouldn't be walking around a store, they would be singing in a store. But that's because I think we've let the world convince us that happiness is joy. And we base happiness off of expression, but we base joy off impression. I want you to think about this. You've probably been around a happy person with an expression of happiness that left little to no impression on you. But whenever you're around a truly joyful person, they can't help but leave an impression on your life. Why? Because the joy of the Lord has left an impression on them.

And we can tell if someone's happy from a mile away, but we can only tell if someone is truly joyful when we're in their presence. Because it's in presence where there's fullness of joy. So this whole time, if you've been wondering, how do I know if I'm enjoying God in this life He's giving me? Well, a great question to ask yourself is what kind of impression do you leave on people when they're in your presence? What kind of impression do you have on people when they're in your presence?

Like, is it an impression of the kingdom? Do they walk away filled with righteousness, peace, and joy? Or is it an expression of the world? Fear, control, facade, anger. Like, when people are around you, do you carry the expression of the world or do you carry the impression of Jesus? Because when you're enjoying God and the life He's giving you in here, you can't help but release that joy to everyone around you out there. And so, what kind of impression do you have on people when they're in your presence? And here's what I love about God – is regardless of how you answer that question, He's created you to carry His impression. He's created you to enjoy Him because when God created us, He created us with the imprint of His joy. And He didn't imprint that joy just on you and I, but on all of creation. “Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Who marked off its dimensions? Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footing set or who laid its cornerstone while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?” God imprints His joy on creation and creation's only response is to enjoy.

How about in Luke, when Jesus comes to town? When He came near the place where the road goes down to the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices. They're in the presence of Jesus, the one who is joy. And their only response is to enjoy. How about in Revelation? We see the saints and angels around the throne room of heaven. Day and night, they never stop saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty, who was and is and is to come." They're in the presence of joy and all they can do is enjoy. Because that's what worship really is – it's enjoying God. And enjoying the life that He's given you. And all throughout Scripture, from Eden to eternity, God is just wanting to show us we were created to enjoy him. That you and I were designed to enjoy him, not to chase life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, to chase Him – to go after Him. Because He is the source of true joy, and freely He shares that with us. Because freely He shares Himself with us.

I want you to think about this. God is the most joyful being in all existence. Eternal pleasures are at His right hand. I don't even know what that means. But He doesn't keep Himself to Himself. He shares Himself with you. And so God created you to share Himself with you. And when He shares Himself with you, He shares joy with you. And the only thing that's left to do is enjoy Him. Enjoy the life He's given you. And so this summer what if that's what you decided to do? Like this summer, what if you just became aware of the joy, the goodness of God that's already available to you? Because make no mistake, this series is not about trying to create joy. It's not about trying to manufacture it, stir it up, call something that's not as though it is. No, it's about paying attention and calling attention to the joy, the goodness of God that's already at work in your life.

Because make no mistake, there is so much of His goodness at work in your life, so much of Himself He's wanting to give you in this life. The question is, are you aware of it? Are you aware of it? And do you want to be aware of it? And in every one of our summer series, whether you've been paying attention or not, we've actually worked a practice into it. A practice –

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something that helps us train in the very thing that we're talking about. And since we're talking about enjoying God and the life He's giving us, one of the best ways to enjoy things is to celebrate things – to pay attention and to call attention to the very thing we're wanting to celebrate. And so this series, that's what we want to do. Over these next 60 days, we want to pay attention and call attention to the goodness of God in our life because you and I, as much as we may want to, we can't make ourselves feel joyful. But what we, what can we do? We can start paying attention and calling attention to the goodness in God, of God in our life. We can point our feet in the direction we want our life to go by celebrating who God is in this life that He came to give us.

Because here's my sense for some of you. Some of you, I think you're here today and you're hearing that this series is about enjoying God and the life He's given you and you're like, "Man, but you have no idea what my life looks like right now." Like, no idea, how you can expect me to hear this and literally walk this out? But as much as that's true, I just I want you to be reminded that like God knows what your life looks like right now. His love is too good for you not to enjoy Him in all seasons. Even in the season that you're in.

For others, I think you're here and you're waiting to enjoy God. Waiting until that breakthrough. Waiting until that healing, waiting until that promotion or that time off. Listen, you don't have to wait until Fourth of July weekend to enjoy God in the life He's giving you. You can do that today, here, now. And for others, I think you're here and you're like, "Man, I'm loving life. Like I got a really, really good life." To you, I just want to say He is the giver of that life. So, this series, be reminded of that. Be reminded that He's given you this life that you're giving and enjoy the things He enjoys in your life.

And so, when you walked in, you got one of these cards. And so, this summer, this series, here's what we're going to invite you to do. Every day, Monday through Saturday, we're going to invite you, find a quiet place, secret place, take a few minutes, just reflect on your day. Think about how you got saw God move, how He's shaping your life, and then we're going to ask that you just pick one of these three promptings. We've got three different things for you, three different options. One is you can choose to celebrate God in an area. You can choose to write down how you experienced God in an area, or you can just choose to thank Jesus for something in your life. Again, you can celebrate how you see God move, how you experience God, or how you just want to be thankful to Jesus.

And then, the invitation is going to be every Sunday, we're going to ask you just find one person. Everybody say, "One." One person. You're with me. Thank you. Listen, that person doesn't even need to be here. They can be anywhere. Find one person and just share one thing that you wrote down from this week. So, maybe you're at a coffee shop. It's Sunday night. You're with a good friend. And you just say, "Hey, man, can I start our time together by just celebrating this friendship? Celebrating who you are and what you mean to me." Maybe it's Sunday night, you're having dinner with the family. You just say, "Hey, family, can I talk to you

about how I experienced God through one of my bike rides this week?" Maybe you're at a graduation party. For whatever reason, it's not raining cuz it seems to be raining everywhere all the time. And you just want to thank Jesus for the weather. Thank Jesus for the time that you have in that space. Whatever it is, like, don't overcomplicate it. You don't have to religious zealot this thing. Yes, God is worth celebrating in His Word, in His worship, in His church, but you know where else? A sunset. A sunrise. A good book. Holding that newborn. A hobby, a date night with your spouse, a medium-rare steak, a game of pickleball, a bubble bath, for goodness' sakes. Like, don't hear this and think suddenly I need to quit all of my hobbies and sell everything because the only way to enjoy God is by reading my Bible. No. He's created you to enjoy Him not just here, but in the life He's giving you out there. Because in Him we live and move and have our being, and He holds all things together. And so, make no mistake, He's in His Word, but He's also in that sunset. He's also in that cup of coffee.

The question is, are you aware? Are you aware and are you celebrating Him in those things? And if you're anything like me, you're probably on board for this whole practice thing, maybe even a little excited about it. But here's what's going to happen. In the next couple of days, life is going to happen. Things will come up. Distractions will pull you away. After a long day, it'll be much easier to kick back, turn on some Netflix, instead of reflecting on how you paid attention or didn't pay attention to the goodness of God in your life. Okay, fair.

But what if you just dreamt with God about what it looked like to take the next 60 days and to celebrate him? To imagine the kind of person that you'd become if for 60 days you gave God the glory. I promise you would be a different person. Dads, you would be a different person. Moms, students, young adults, super adults, families, you'd be a different person. My family and I do this every night. For the last few years, this has been something that we've practiced and I can just tell you firsthand, it's changed me. Because gratitude, celebration, it takes what you have and it turns it into enough. And you've been given a good life. And you have a good God. And there is so much of Himself He wants to show you, so much of Himself He wants to give you, and so much of your life to celebrate. So much of your life to be grateful for.

And so, find someone to do this with. Like put your stake in the ground. Even if you don't like it, even if you don't want to do it, even if you miss today, don't miss two. Because Jesus is worthy of us paying attention and calling attention to. God has given us a good life. And He's created us to enjoy it and to enjoy Him through it all. And so this summer, this series, may you enjoy God and enjoy the life He's giving you in Jesus' name.

Let's pray together. Jesus, I just get even the sense right now that and some of us just we care about our life. But sometimes we just take it a little too seriously. I think right now you want to remind us that the kingdom of heaven belongs to the least of these – belongs to little children. And so right now, would you stir up even just a childlike faith? Would you stir up this pervasive sense of well-being? And would you give us the ability to rejoice, to be glad, to take delight in all seasons? In fact, I just even want to declare like Valley Creek Church would be known as a

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church that enjoys God. That we would be known as a people that enjoys the life He's giving us. That when we walk around, when we go to the store, when we go to school, when we're at home, that people would see that we enjoy God. That we enjoy this life that He's giving us. And so even right now, can you just celebrate God and who He is in your life? Celebrate His presence in your life. Celebrate the life that He's giving you. Like right now, we choose to position ourselves to enjoy God and the life that He's giving us because you have a good God and you have a good life. And so Jesus, this summer, this series, we want to enjoy you and enjoy the life that you came to give us. In Jesus' name. Amen.