

"Are You Enjoying God Today?"
July 26, 2026 | Pastor Cordel Robinson

Well, hey everybody. Welcome to Valley Creek Church. My name is Cordel Robinson aka Papa C. And I get to serve in your amazing Valley Creek College. Yes, so before we get started, can we just welcome all of our campuses? Whether you're at Gainesville or Lewisville, Flower Mound, online – we're so glad that you are here with us. So today we wrap up our series 60 Days of Enjoying God and the Life He's Giving You. I think you'll agree with me, it's been a great series. It's been exactly what we've needed this summer. It's been inspiring. It's been challenging. It's helped us rethink how we engage with God on a daily basis. Whether we're in a storm or in a season, whether we're at church or work or at home, whatever we may be doing, God wants us to enjoy Him and the life He's giving us.

We've also paid attention and called attention to the goodness of God. And that's been a great practical exercise during this summer. And throughout the series, we've tried to ask very personal and probing questions like: Are you enjoying God? Is there a pervasive sense of well-being when you come into His presence? Or – here's a good one – do you smile when you think about God? We also asked, are you enjoying the life that He's giving you? Are you enjoying what He's doing in you and through you – through your personhood, through your influence, through your relationships? Or how about do you like who you are and how it's going with you? This is what we ask to get us to enjoy more of God.

By the way, uh, Pastor Jason at the beginning of this series mentioned that several years ago, we started using this phrase, enjoying God and the life He's given us, past tense. And that served us well for that season. But in preparing for this series, we wondered, are we putting the emphasis on the wrong syllable? If you know what I mean. You see, by historically looking at the goodness of God, maybe we inadvertently miss the present goodness of God right here. Yes, He has given us and He will give us, but I believe sometimes we miss this moment that God is giving to us present tense to enjoy. And when we're aware of this, we can't help but release and experience joy in our lives, which is the spirit of this psalm: Psalm 118. This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

You see, too often we think a day is just given to us so that we can endure it. Oh, I'm just slogging through – wait until the end. No. God gave us this day to enjoy it, to be glad in it, to rejoice, to recommit to the joy that Jesus gives us. And we do that whether we're in a mountain or a valley – whether we're in a challenge or experiencing a breakthrough. You see, I think way too often we forget that God is a God of today. We love to focus on His past faithfulness. And yes, we can hold on to His future promises, but too often we miss His goodness here and now, and we forget who God really is.

Do you remember the story when God chose Moses to deliver His people at the burning bush? And Moses responds by raising all kinds of questions. You remember that? And he, one of the questions he asks is, "Okay, God, if the people ask me what Your name is, how am I supposed to answer?" Do you remember God's answer? He says, "I am who I am." He wants to be known as the everpresent, self-existing, all powerful, all knowing God of today, right here, right

now. This is why the apostle Paul says, "Now is the time of God's favor. Now is the day of salvation." Not yesterday, not tomorrow, but today – is the God of our present. You see, church, we will never find more blessing or favor or love than what's available right here, right now. God may not always be who we want Him to be, but God is always exactly who we need Him to be today. And so, uh, some of you, you're saying, "Okay, Cordel, you got me there. Maybe I, I do overlook that God is the God of today, but what am I supposed to do with this?" I am so glad you asked. Take a look at what Hebrews says, "But encourage one another daily, as long as it's called 'today.'" Last I looked, today is still known as today. So, let's encourage each other. Let's spur each other on to enjoy God and the life He's giving us today.

So, that's exactly what I'd like to do in this message. I'd just like to share some personal stories of how I've enjoyed God and the life He's given me over various todays. In fact, if truth be told, I was never told this, but I suspect I may have been invited to share this message because I happen to have more todays than anyone else on staff. That would be 27,466 which represents, that represents a whole lot of today's stories. I'm not going to share all of them with you, but just enough to encourage you.

So, let me begin by sharing the genesis of this story idea. You see, last fall I wanted to get to know the students. I wanted them, them to get to know me. So, I invited eight students at a time over multiple weeks. It was entirely voluntary, but they signed up and we called it Pancakes with Papa C. So, I served them pancakes. And on the table, I put face down a number of index cards with shared stories and Scriptures. And I just asked random students, "Hey, it's your turn. Pick a story." And they would pick a story and we'd be off to the races of my sharing how God grew me, uh grew me and brought joy to my life in that story. I think our, our students were encouraged by it. But even more than that, more importantly, I think they caught this lesson that the more we behold God, the more we'll enjoy the life He's giving us today. You see, when uh, when we get our eyes off of the outlook to the uplook and look to Jesus, that's when we can really enjoy the life God's giving us. So, are you up for some Papa C stories? I hope that these bring encouragement to you and I apologize upfront that I didn't bring pancakes.

Okay, so my first milestone moment story is this: that God knows my name. God knows my name. My wife Christy and I had just returned from an amazing mission trip to Uganda. And we were reminiscing over all the many great encounters we had. And whenever we go on mission trips, inevitably a little girl would attach herself to my wife. So I turned to Christy. I said, "What's the name of that little girl?" She, she attached herself to you for like three days running. She was so amazing. And with some degree of what I discerned as displeasure, Christy said, "You mean Vivian?" Which is code for, "I've told you her name a dozen times." And then she added a response that I can only describe as snarky. Now, please don't tell her I said that. But she added, "Aren't you glad God hasn't forgotten your name?" Okay. What she meant for snarky, God meant for good because that began an investigation of how God does know my name. Let me share with you what I discovered. 2 Timothy 2, "The Lord knows, He knows those

who are His." He knows you. He knows me. We have names and our names have dignity. They have worth involved in them. We're not a bunch of numbers on a spreadsheet. No, we're beloved sons and daughters who God personally knows. Here's another, uh verse I want you to catch. Stay with me here. This is God speaking in Isaiah, "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has just borne?" Now, picture this, especially you moms. You know that situation. You've picked out a name for your little son or daughter. The birth has taken place. The, the nurse or midwife brings that child to you. You hold it for the first time. Now, can you conceive in that moment that the mother would forget that child's name? No. That is inconceivable. That's one of the strongest human bonds known to man. But God uses this. This is hyperbole here. He says, "Though she may forget," which would never happen, "I will not forget you!" Why? "See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hand." Did you know that your name is tattooed to the nail scarred hands of Jesus? Yes. The font is very small, but He knows you. He knows your name, and you carry worth and dignity with that name.

Okay, here's my second memorable today: that God is my Father who never disappoints. So the scene here is that um I was asked back in seminary to give a little devotion at our graduation prayer breakfast. This was such a huge honor. My colleagues – fellow students – had chosen me to do this and I invited my parents. I, I wanted to make them so proud. You see, four years earlier, my dad had not been keen on my choice to pursue ministry. He wanted me to be a doctor. So, I was hoping in this occasion to reverse my father's opinion of me and my career choice. But of course, that's not how it went down. You see, my father had just bought a brand new camera, and just about the time that I came up to the podium, he couldn't get it to turn on. So, he walked out in the hallway to, you know, fiddle with this new camera and he missed most of my talk. It was a huge disappointment – you know, expectation, reality, disappointment – that's what I felt. But later, later that day I was sharing with a classmate and he said you know, Robinson, our dads will inevitably disappoint us but you can take this to the bank God will never disappoint. You know how Proverbs says a well-timed word is a thing of beauty? That was a thing of beauty in my life because it was the key that began to unlock my bondage to parental disappointment.

So let me ask you, do you carry wounds from your parents disappointing you? Perhaps from their criticism or just their neglect? Or how about this? Do you carry wounds as a parent where you know you've disappointed your children? Either way, I'm here to tell you God is a Father who will never disappoint you. Look at this Scripture: "He's the Father to the fatherless." Now, we look at that and we think, "Oh, that's just a statement about orphans, right?" That He is. And that's true. He is a Father to orphans. But I think it's so much bigger than that. I think it's saying that when we as children ever feel that disconnect and that disappointment in our parents that God will step in the gap and be the Father we always long Him to be. Or whenever a parent is less than they know they should be as parents, I believe this promise says God is more than enough to fill the gap. He steps in and becomes the Father we always long for. So, how are we doing with our stories? Are you still with me?

So, here's my third personal story. Pass the syrup, if you will. This one is God is always in all my details. He's always in all my details. So, this was a day that I'll never forget for a number of reasons. It was the day in 2010 that I had open heart surgery. Now I don't wish this experience on anyone but I do wish for you the revelation I receive that God can be trusted in all my details. You see my wife Christy and I, we have this expression when we're not being snarky. This is an expression we often use when we see God's fingerprints all over a situation. We say, "Oh, that was Father-filtered." That's just an expression we picked up. We like to use it just meaning that we can see that that situation first passed through the intervening and loving control of our good Father. But what I learned that day at my surgery is that we can't pick and choose what's Father-filtered because it's all Father-filtered. There's nothing that escapes the details and the involvement of our good, good Father.

You see, what started as a routine calcium test and then a treadmill stress test, then an arterial scope, it revealed that my left main artery was severely blocked. I didn't know that. I had just ridden 65 miles the weekend before in Texas heat. No problem. See, I would have never noticed that, but God knew it. And so, what did He do? He graciously intervened, giving me new plumbing so I could enjoy many more todays that He's giving me. So, on the morning of my surgery at the crack of dawn, they put me in this hideous excuse for a hospital gown, you know, and in a wheelchair and they wheel me down this hallway about to take me in the surgical suite. Well, there was some problem in the suite and I had to wait outside for almost an hour. You know – people passing me by, me trying to grab the gown.

So, you can imagine what I was doing in that situation. I was trying not to worry. Isn't that what we do? And, and my mind went to the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus says, "Don't worry for your life." Remember that? I wanted to say, "But Jesus, I'm about to have my chest cracked open." Have you ever experienced that? Oh, yes, you have. So later in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gives this unbelievable worry reduction strategy. He says, "Think about birds and flowers." What? That makes no sense at all. If He were a psychologist today, we'd have to revoke His license. That's insane – birds and flowers. But maybe, just maybe, He knows something that we've forgotten. Look at what He says, "Consider the ravens: they do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn." They don't have John Deere tractors. Yet God – who? God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds.

Let me ask you a question. Who feeds the birds? According to Google, there are 50 billion wild birds on the planet. No storerooms, no barns. But who feeds them? God does. He goes on, "Consider how the wildflowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all of his splendor was dressed like one of these... how much more will He clothe you." Will He cover you? Will He crown you with splendor and beauty? So who put the blue in bluebonnets? Who put the black-eyed in black-eyed Susans? God did! You see, there's no detail of a bird or flower's life that escapes the loving oversight of our good good Father. He's in control of everything. Even when the bills mount up, even when the promotion falls through,

even when the neighbors complain, even when the doctor walks in the room and says, "Mr. Robinson, you need open heart surgery." Yes, even then. And I'm so thankful that God used the doctors to reveal that blockage so that I could have so many more todays to enjoy him.

So can I share one more milestone moment? He knows my name. He's a Father who will never disappoint. He's always in all my details. And God never, never, never stops pursuing me. One of my greatest honors and privileges in this season of my life is just pouring into the next generation. We have such an amazing Next Gen population here and I love starting conversations especially just walking in the, the halls. And one of the questions or statements that I make is, "Tell me your Jesus story." Tell me your Jesus story. And sometimes I get that puppy dog look – like Jesus story – like some of you are giving me right now. So what is a Jesus story? We complicate what God simplifies. It's simply this story of Jesus calling you, Jesus drawing you, Jesus wooing you to Himself. This is how the Scriptures describe it. This is Jesus speaking in Revelation, "Here I am. I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice, opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person and they with Me." You see, Jesus wants to have pancakes with you. He wants to have a kitchen table, intimate, personal conversation. And the way He invites us to that is by knocking at our door. He's not an enforcer. He's not going to break the door down. He's going to wait for us to open the door. But what I want you to catch is He is persistent on knocking at all of our doors.

So when I was 12 years old, Jesus came knocking at my door. You see, I grew up in a mainline denominational church, and the tradition was when you turn 12, uh, you go to a class where you learn how to be a member of the church. And the teacher would take all of us into the sanctuary. That's what we called it back then. And he took us up behind the altar and there was a big golden cross on red felt with all these symbols of Christianity around it. Symbols like the Lamb of God because Jesus is the Lamb of God or bread because Jesus is the Bread of Life or a dove signifying the Spirit coming down. You get the drift – all these symbols. And so our assignment, according to the teacher, was to choose one of those symbols around the outline of the red felt and write a brief paper on it. It was an easy enough assignment, right? But I didn't like it. So I pressed back and I asked the teacher if I could write about the cross because I knew Jesus had died on a cross. I wanted to know why. And the teacher said, "Well, son, that's not the assignment." But somehow I just persisted and he relented and so I wrote about the cross. And that began my story of being drawn to Jesus and that has changed me forever.

There's a great verse we all know in Psalm 23. It says, "Surely Your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life." Now, that's a beautiful verse. Wouldn't you agree? And that's certainly true that God's goodness and love, they follow me. But sometimes I think we get a vision of it being very passive like I move here and eventually God's love follows me over here very passively. But when I studied this particular verb in the original, I found that it's a hunter's word. And David was a what? A hunter. And so when I looked up the word, it's more of an animated, strong action word. It means to chase, to stalk, to hound, to dog, to do whatever it takes to pursue. I like this translation better: "Surely Your goodness and unfailing love will

pursue me all the days of my life." What I want you to catch is how Jesus in His goodness will relentlessly knock and tirelessly pursue us because that's how much He loves us all the days of your life and my life.

So last fall I had an older cousin who passed away at, at the age of 86. She was like a, a mom to our family after our own mom passed away. And so I wanted to be there for the family. And I drove down to Houston. It happened to be in the same church I grew up in. They had been devout members for 50-60 years. They were an incredible family. And so I walked in with the family. I sat down as soon as the minister got up to start his funeral message. I saw an image that absolutely wrecked me. Take a look at what I saw – same golden cross, same red felt, same symbols. 63 years ago it was that that drew me to the person of Jesus. And it was as if Jesus were just whispering, "Hey, Cordel, I'm still pursuing you because I'm not done with you." I suspect that there are some people within earshot of my voice that need to hear that. You see, you, you probably came in here not feeling very loved, not feeling very pursued, and certainly not feeling very joyful. You may be staring at a college tuition bill that you can't pay, or a stress in a relationship, a chronic health problem, or maybe your car just won't start. I get that. But let me remind you of the lesson I shared with our college student: the more we behold God, the more we'll enjoy the life that He's giving us today, no matter what we're facing. You see, we don't get joy by focusing on our circumstances. We don't even get joy by focusing on joy. We only get joy by focusing on Jesus and what He's doing. It's never tied to our outlook. It's only tied to our uplook. So if that's you, may I encourage you? Don't leave here discouraged because Jesus wants to lift your head to see how He's in control of everything in your life. See, Jesus said, "I came that My joy may be in you so that your joy may be full." He doesn't want our joy to be half-hearted. He wants it to be to its fullest measure.

So, hey church, you've been great. Thanks for listening to my stories. Can I remind you? Let me remind you that God knows your name, that God is a Father who will never disappoint you, that God is always in all your details, and God never stops – He never stops pursuing you. So, normally church, I would ask you to bow your heads and close your eyes, but I'm going to do something a little different if you'll allow me. As I mentioned earlier, 75 years I've lived a rich, abundant, amazing life. And from that reservoir, I would just like to extend a fatherly blessing if I could. So, in whatever way you want to receive this, just receive this right now. So, Valley Creek Church, you have a great God and you have a great life in Jesus' name. May you enjoy your God and your life today. So, I pray for you that you would receive blessing, favor, richness, and abundance. I pray that you would, that God would give you wisdom and health, love, laughter, and longevity. But most of all, church, I pray that God would give you joy. supernatural, over-the-top, unexplainable, glorious joy that can only come when the King of Kings is in residence on the castle of our hearts. Let us not look to our circumstances for joy. May we look to Jesus for joy. Church, you have a great God and you have a great life. May you enjoy both today. May it be so. Blessings.