

Truth Matters: Why choose Jesus now?

Wylie United Methodist Church

Pastor Jeff Hatcher – June 5, 2011

John 15:1-11

¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^a so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. ⁹ "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

The question:

"Why not just enjoy life and wait until we come to the end to ask God for forgiveness for everything that we've done wrong and receive His grace and eternal life then?"

The question is risky because...

1. TOMORROW IS NOT GUARANTEED

Ten Virgins (Matt 25:1-13)

We are not guaranteed tomorrow.

In fact, we are not guaranteed today.

Be Ready!

The question is asked because...

2. TOO FEW CHRISTIANS DEMONSTRATE A JOY-FILLED LIFE

¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Neh 8:10

The joy of the LORD is your strength.

Ps 51:12

Restore to me the joy of your salvation.

⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

The question assumes that...

3. JESUS IS THE GREAT PARTY POOPER

It assumes that life in Christ is miserable and should be avoided until the end.

News flash! Jesus is not the great party pooper!

He came to give us "complete joy" (John 15:11)

He came to give us "abundant life" (John 10:10)

He came to "heal the brokenhearted" and "set the captives free" (Luke 4:18)

[Jesus says] **4** Remain in me, and I will remain in you. **11** I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Waiting to ask Jesus into our hearts until the end (even if we could guarantee it to be successful) is our loss not our gain.