

Sermon Title: **“So that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.”**

Bible: **Psalm 98 & John 15:9-17**

Where & When: at Gilroy UMC on Sunday, May 9, 2021

Audience: about 30 people (including 15 Youtube viewers)

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, thank you so much for your steadfast love and faithfulness, even when our faith is shaken. You chose us. You called us not as servants, but as friends. Please be with all of us during this time. Please be with my lips and mouth in your love and grace. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

1. Mother's Day

Happy Mother's Day! I hope that all of you have a happy Mother's Day. As I prepared today's message, I was not sure if I am the right person to give the message on Mother's Day. That's because I am not a nice son. Actually, I decided not to be a nice son, because I believe that a nice son is not a good son. What if there is a difference between what you want to do and what your mother wants you to do? Of course, today is Mother's Day, so, please say "Yes" to your mother, whatever she wants to do. But, when you make a big decision, if what your mother wants you to do or to be is different from what you want, what do you do? For example, my mother prefers a church or a denomination in Korea. She doesn't like me to be a United Methodist pastor. My faith came from my mother's faith, but I know that there is a big gap between my theology and her theology. This is just an example. Many decisions that I made are not what my mother wanted. As my mother was the closest family member, when there was no

support or agreement, it was a disappointment and a challenge. But I believe that a nice son is not a good son. Thus, I have made my own decisions, and this led me to be here and now, with my wife.

2. Love & Joy

Today's scripture readings came from the lectionary for the sixth Sunday of Easter. If I need to summarize today's Gospel Reading of John, it is like this: Love one another, and you will be joyful. I know that this is true. For example, as a 3 year old Gilroy-an, I love Garlic, and there is joy, a hot and spicy joy! I am looking forward to this year's drive-through garlic festival. I love my wife, and my life is full of joy. I love this church, and my joy is overflowing. However, to me, to love my mother is very difficult, and it does not give me joy. I am so sorry to say this on Mother's Day, and as a son, this is my honest confession. So please pray for me and my mother, and please embrace us in your love and mercy. My genes consist of half of my mother's genes, and I learned from my mother about many things, good and bad. I am thankful for my mother's dedication, and I respect my mother. However, to me, to love my mother is the most difficult commandment. Rather than joy, what I find is struggle and frustration.

3. Taegyo

I meditate on today's scriptures again and again in the time of eastertide. Do you think that there is a joy in Jesus Christ's resurrection? How about his way to the cross? Can you find joy on his way to the cross? In Korea, there is a prenatal education, which is called Taegyo. Even when babies are in their mothers' wombs, Korean mothers have some kind of regulations and education. For nine months when the babies are in the womb, mothers tend to be very careful of

what they eat, see, listen, say, and read. They read children's stories to their babies in the womb. They try to listen to beautiful music. They do not use bad language. They try to see beautiful nature scenery. They avoid evil thoughts. Korean fathers try to provide any food or fruits that mothers want to eat. Sometimes, the fruit they crave is not in season. Sometimes, mothers look for some food at midnight. Some food is not easy to find near their home. But, fathers find it and feed mothers and the babies. For nine months, mothers give up many things, and do more things, because they love their babies. It could be out of sacrifice or dedication. I believe that there is joy for mothers, not only on the day of their babies' births, but also every day of this Taegyo, nine months. I know that I used to be a baby who experienced this Taegyo, for nine months, from my mother. Today, on Mother's Day, I just bowed to my mother's love. Love one another, and love mothers, and the joy will be there. Happy Mother's Day!

Closing Prayer

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, we come to you. Please lead us to love one another. May your joy be in us, and our joy be complete. In Jesus' name. Amen.