INTRODUCTION:
1. When we think of the idea of joy and the Christian life we realize that we are faced with making a choice.
   A. Are we to be a “Kill Joy” or a “Real Joy?”
2. You know who the "kill joy" is.
   A. He is the person who gets up in the morning and reads the obituaries to see if his name is there.
   B. He is the person who is feeling bad when he is feeling good for fear that he is going to feel worse when he feels better.
3. God wants his people to be “real joys” instead of “kill joys” - Psalms 51:12.
   A. There should be joy associated with the saved relationship.
   B. There should be joy connected with being a child of God.
   1. Ill: Evangelist came to town and asked a little boy if the people enjoyed their religion? Little boy replied, “Them what has it does.”
4. There are several reasons as to why we are “kill joys” rather than “real joys.”

BODY:
1. WE ARE NOT LISTENING TO GOD ENOUGH
   A. That is, we are not studying the Word of God - John 15:11.
   B. When we separate ourselves from the Word of God we are denying ourselves the joy that Jesus would have us to gain from His Word.
2. WE ARE NOT TALKING TO GOD ENOUGH
   A. That is, we are not praying enough - John 16:24.
   1. One study indicated that the average believer prays four minutes a day and the average preacher - seven minutes.
3. WE ARE NOT SOWING ENOUGH SEED
   A. Luke 8:11
   1. If you look at someone's garden and see nothing coming up there is a good reason for that - nothing has been planted.
   B. The reason that most members of the church aren't producing more Christians is that they aren't sowing the seed.
   C. The happiest people in the church are those who are leading others to the Lord.
   1. The reason we are not converting more people is not we do not know how, or we do not have the aptitude, or we do not know enough Bible to do so.
      A. Most people who are converted are done so by new converts who have little knowledge of the Bible.
   2. The reason that we are not winning the lost is that we aren't sowing the seed.
4. WE AREN'T SACRIFICING ENOUGH
   A. Our attitude should not be I will give until it hurts, but I will give until it feels good - 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7.
   1. In talking about sacrifice, I am not only talking about money, but also time, talents, and energy.
   B. Where is our sacrifice? - Matthew 13:44
   1. This man sold all that he had with joy in order to obtain the great treasure.
   2. Someone may ask, “What right do you have to ask me to sacrifice?”
A. I am not, God is!

5. WE ARE TOO WELL BLESSED
   A. One of the ironies of life is the more ideal the circumstances, the more unhappy we are.
      1. Someone has said, “The problem with Christians today is that no one is trying to kill them.”
         A. Paul wrote from prison, yet he expressed such ideas as joy and rejoicing - Philippians 2:17; 2 Corinthians 7:4.
   B. Even though our cup runneth over, many professed Christians never seem to have the joy they should because they believe that joy comes from things, instead of service - Luke 12:15.

6. CHURCH LEADERSHIP LACKS JOY
   B. Elders need to show joy - Hebrews 13:17.
   C. When we have more joyous leaders our congregations are going to be more joyous.
      1. Three ways of showing joy in our assemblies.

7. TOO MANY HAVE BEEN PROGRAMMED TO BE NEGATIVE
   A. We look at the Scriptures to see the negative instead of the positive.
      1. When we are negative we cannot have the joy that the Lord wants us to have.
   B. We need to be enjoying our religion instead of enduring it.
      1. Many look as if they were baptized in vinegar.

8. WE OVERLOOK THE EMPHASIS OF THE SCRIPTURES ON JOY
      1. Perhaps we too are overlooking the great emphasis that God has placed on joy.
         A. 165 references to joy.
         B. 136 references to glad and gladness.
         C. Along with a host of references to such words as enjoy, joyed, joyful, joying, joyfully, joyfulness, and joyous.
         D. 79 references to baptism.
         E. About a dozen references to the Lord's Supper.
         F. A handful of references on not forsaking the assembly.
      2. How many sermons do we hear on joy?

9. WE HAVE NOT TAKEN THE STEPS PRESCRIBED IN ROMANS 14:17
   A. These steps lead to the kind of Christian life that God wants for us.
      1. Righteousness, peace, and joy.
      2. We cannot have joy without peace and righteousness.

CONCLUSION:
1. A joyous congregation is going to be a magnetic, attractive, soul winning congregation.
   A. A more joyous congregation begins with more joyous Christians.
   B. A more joyous congregation begins with me.
      1. Each of us need to say that to ourselves and then live it.