

Advent #3 - Joy

Joy is not restricted because joy is found in a person, and that person is Jesus Christ.

"Christian Joy is a profound decision of faith and hope in the power of Jesus, his own life and love".
Tim Mackie and Jon Collins, *The Bible Project*.

Luke 2:8-11 (NLT) - That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Saviour—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!"

Joy is available to the World

Luke 2:9 (NLT) - Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified.

Luke 2:10 (NLT) - But the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people."

John 15:11 (NLT) - "I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!"

Joy in the Wilderness

Habakkuk 3:17-19 (NLT) - Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation! The Sovereign Lord is my strength! He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights.

Luke 2:11 (NLT) - "The Saviour—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!"

Nehemiah 8:10 (NIV) - Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NLT) - Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross.

Enter into this joy by placing your faith in Jesus.
We can continually experience this joy when we fix our eyes on Jesus.
We can share this joy by spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

Study Guide

1. How would you define joy?
2. Do you feel like you're experiencing joy right now? Why or why not?
3. What difference does it make for you knowing that joy is not measured by our circumstances but by our faith in Jesus Christ?
4. What can you do today to start experiencing more of God's joy?