

## “Rooted in Joy”

December 13, 2020

Webster’s defines joy as “the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires.”

The angel proclaimed to the shepherds: “Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.” (Luke 2:10 KJV) Let’s look at Christmas as Mary might have felt it as she gazed at her newborn baby Jesus sleeping on the sweet-smelling hay.

1. **Mary felt the joy of bearing a child.** Compare with Sarah (Genesis 21:6), Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1) and Mary’s cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1:58). See Psalm 127:3,5.
2. **Mary had the joy of being God’s chosen instrument.** Read Luke 1:42, 46-49.
3. **Mary knew the joy of having a right standing before God.** Compare with Luke 10:17-21. See also Luke 1:34, 38 and Hebrews 1:1-2.

How full is the joy of those who answer the call to follow Christ. It’s a joy that provides balance in the turbulent COVID-19 world in which we live. It’s a joy that is the foundation for a sound, happy life when we see so many unsound, unhappy lives around us. It’s a joy that God alone can give. (Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 1:18; Revelation 22:17)

**For reflection and application:** Let’s ...

- examine our hearts to see whether we are “in the faith” as Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians 13:5. The true joy of Christmas is released within us when we make the personal decision to follow Jesus.
- allow the joy to grow by counting the many blessings God has showered on us, even amid a global pandemic. Begin with Jesus and then move on from there.
- express joy to our heavenly Father (who is the One who dreamt up Christmas) by worshiping, singing, praying and silently communing with Him.
- find ways to make the Christmas experience of those around us more joyful. Let’s be intentional about it, not leaving it to chance.