

# The Gift of Joy

## Announcements

- **Dream Team** – Sunday, December 9th, 5:00 pm at LCC, GCC and SSC.  
Help get your small group serving together by attending encouraging those in your group to attend *Dream Team Orientation*.

## Warm-up

What was the Christmas present that gave you the greatest thrill?

In this series will be looking at some of the gifts God gives us. Today, we will look at God's gift of joy.

## Word & Application

**Read Galatians 5:22.** According to this passage, where does joy originate?

Joy flows out of our connection to God through his Holy Spirit. Happiness is dependent on our circumstances but joy is possible in all circumstance. Joy is a gift God promises to give us – we must choose to receive it. We need to let the Holy Spirit release God's gift of joy in our lives.

In order to find out how to receive God's joy we are going to look at three choices the shepherds made as part of the first Christmas.

### 1. They chose to hear the Good News.

**Read Luke 2:10.** Notice this message of good news was not just for the shepherds, but for all. God profoundly interrupted the shepherds' lives while they were performing their daily routine of watching their flock. How has God spoken to you during your ordinary flow of life?

Gospel means good news, and the good news is that Jesus is inviting us to have a relationship with him. He wants to make a radical, joyous difference in lives today.

God offers forgiveness for the wrong, help for our struggles, and a new direction for our lives. How has God's good news brought joy into your life?

In order to keep this joy in our lives, we need to apply God's truth and power to our circumstances. We do this by speaking God's word over our problems.

### 2. They continued in joy when they did what God said.

**Read Luke 2:15.** The shepherds heard God tell them to go and find a baby and when they did, they found joy. It would have been easy for them to stay in those fields outside of Bethlehem, but then they would have spent the rest of their lives wondering what might have happened.

Have you experienced any regrets because of not following God?

**Read Psalm 97:11.** The good news is that it is never too late to follow God, and when we do, we experience His joy.

**Read John 16:24.** In order to experience His joy, God encourages us to ask. What are you asking God for during this season of your life?

### **3. Joy came when they chose to tell someone else.**

**Read Luke 2:17.** The shepherds went out and immediately told others. What good news has God done in your life you can joyously share? Who would you like to tell about what Jesus has done in your life?

How can you practically share God's joy with others during this holiday season? Throughout the rest of the year?

### **Prayer**

Ask God to place people in your hearts and in your paths so you can share His good news this Christmas season and throughout the rest of the year. Also, take time to ask for specific prayer requests from those in your small group.