

# Advent 2021 – Jesus Is Our Joy

It is the third week of Advent and we are talking about how Jesus is our joy.

## Introduction

Advent is a very special time of the year. It is a time of preparing for the coming of Christ. Advent simply means coming. We enjoy celebrating Advent each year with you. Each week we light a new candle symbolizing the Light that is to come into the world on Christmas Day, Jesus' Birthday.

The colors of Advent are traditional. The deep purples are used to represent the royalty of Jesus. Purple has historically represented royalty so it makes sense we make use of the color in our candles and other decorations. However, on this third week of Advent as the days are getting shorter and the nights are getting longer we substitute a joyful bright color for the week of joy. This week we light the pink candle for joy.

We have 3 candles lit today. The first one is for faith and the second is for peace. Today, we have lit the Joy candle as we celebrate the first Advent when Jesus was born more than 2000 years ago. Jesus has brought joy into the world.

## Parenting Shows Us Joy

If you are a parent and have had the wonderful opportunity of holding your baby for the first time then you know what true joy feels like. It overwhelms the soul and leaves you speechless.

Joy is not happiness, although you can be happy when filled with joy. Joy is more about well-being. It is a heart of gladness and delight. We can experience joy even when things are not going as planned. Take for instance the circumstance surrounding the birth of Jesus:

Mary and Joseph were on their way to register in a census. They were traveling by donkey and Mary was almost ready to give birth! When Mary went into labor all the hotels were booked up! They had to prepare a place to stay and give birth in a barn.

The Savior was born and joy abounded. This joy was not just with Mary and Joseph. The joy that was birthed that day spread around the world. Luke records what the angels said to some shepherds tending their flocks. Luke 2:9-11 says:

### Luke 2:9-11

(9) An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. (10) But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. (11) Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

Despite their circumstance, Jesus was born. Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the Wisemen, and so many other people were filled with joy.



## Jesus Brings Joy. He Is the Good News

The angel said that the news of Jesus being born “will cause great joy for all the people.” The long-awaited Messiah had finally come. Israel had been watching and waiting for centuries for him and he was now with them.

Hundreds of years before Jesus’ birth the prophet Isaiah prophesied the joy that the Messiah would bring. Isaiah 65:18 says:

Isaiah 65:18

(18) But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.

God promised that delight would come to Jerusalem and people would experience joy.

We read God’s promise of joy again in Psalm 16:11, which says:

Psalm 16:11

(11) You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Jesus brings joy. We can experience the joy of Jesus when we realize that through him our sins are forgiven and we can have eternal life. To experience this true joy we must invite Jesus into our hearts and lives. To know Jesus and to be truly known by him brings joy as we experience his peace, his hope, and his love.

Jesus said that he will make his joy complete in us. Listen to what he said as recorded by the Apostle John in John 15:9-11:

John 15:9-11

(9) “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. (10) If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. (11) I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”

## Joy This Christmas

Each one of us can experience the joy of Christ this Christmas and for our entire lives. Jesus said that if we remain in his love and keep his commandments then we will experience his joy in us. The interesting thing here is that when we keep his commandments we actually remain in his love.

His commandments embody love. He said the greatest commandments are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself.

So in essence, to experience the joy of Christ means to love him and to love others. When we can truly love then we will truly experience joy. Joy is not found in decorations nor is it found in presents. Joy is found when we invite Jesus into our hearts and lives.

Think of that newborn baby. As you first laid eyes on your child, you immediately loved it. You experienced joy.



## Conclusion

As we celebrate the first coming of Christ. We would like to encourage you to take time this week preparing your heart. We have some suggested scripture reading. We encourage you to read Isaiah 12, Isaiah 35, and John 15:9-17.

These passages go along with what we have been talking about today; Jesus is our joy.

Jesus was more than a baby, he was born as the Savior of the world who has brought peace, faith, and joy to mankind. As you go about your preparations for Christmas may you be mindful of the true meaning of Christmas.

May you bring joy to those around you who may not be experiencing joy.

