

WAITING WITH JOY

John 16:19-24

Isaiah 35

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- How do you define joy? Is joy different than happiness? Are they related?
- Where have you observed or experienced joy recently?

Joy has almost become synonymous with Christmas. We sing “Joy to the World” and write “Joy!” on our Christmas cards, but how often do we let those cues guide us to reflect on the deep meaning and significant impact of our Christian joy? Studying Jesus’ words about joy in suffering and a prophetic picture of what our joy looks like helps us grasp and appreciate the profound joy that fills us during the season of Christmas and transforms our lives all year long.

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- Do you allow Christ’s presence to touch all aspects of your life, or do you compartmentalize your life? How do you think this affects how you experience joy in your work, in your play, in your church, or in your home?
- Read the Christmas story in Luke 2:1-20. What is the significance of the angels sharing the news of Christ’s birth with the shepherds? How can this simple story bring joy to various people and situations today?
- In segment 3, host Scott Hoezee explains, by telling the story of Zacchaeus, that joy isn’t something we have to find or develop, it’s given to us in our salvation. How are you letting the joy in your heart transform your life as you wait for Christ to come again?
- Are there particular scripture verses that bring you joy by reminding you of God’s strength, salvation, and provision during times of difficulty or sorrow? Was there a particular experience that solidified the meaning of these verses for you? Think of a way to keep them handy; share the verses and why they’re meaningful to you with others who need joy.

Related Passages

- **1 Thessalonians 1:6**
- **Revelation 12**
- **Isaiah 45:1-7**

- **Psalm 30**
- **Luke 2:8-14**

Conclusion

Personal situations differ and not everyone welcomes Christmas cheer with the same happiness and excitement. There may be broken families with raw wounds; mourning loved ones; loneliness; and a myriad of other human emotions that make traditional Christmas spirit elusive or make it difficult to participate in conventional festivities of the season with gusto. Be alert and sensitive as you discuss and celebrate the season. Dwell in Christ's presence and allow the depth and significance of real joy to wash over you. Pray that you will be prepared in all circumstances to come alongside someone and share this joy that has transformed your life through all seasons.

<https://groundwork.reframemedia.com/episodes/waiting-with-joy>

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