

Christmas Eve 2021

“Where to Find and Experience Joy this Christmas”

Luke 2:8-14

Where to Find and Experience Joy this Christmas

1. Find joy in _____.

“God could have made all nutritious food taste like sawdust and given us an irresistible urge to eat it anyway. ...This says something wonderful about the One who made us. God invented taste buds, and 10 million different flavors to go with them. The incredible pleasure of taste bears witness both that God is and that he is good.” (Tim Shorey)

Acts 14: 17 ...he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.”

“On page one of the Bible, God says that this world is “very good,” and so naturally people find joy in beautiful and good things of life, like growing flocks or an abundant harvest on the hills (Psalm 65:11-12). The poet of Psalm 104 says a good bottle of wine is God’s gift “to bring joy to people’s hearts” (v. 15). People find joy at a wedding (Jeremiah 33:11) or in their children (Proverbs 23:24-25). There’s even a Hebrew proverb that compares the joy that perfume brings to your nose with the joy a good friend brings to your heart (Proverb 27:9).” (The Bible Project video on “Joy”)

2. Find joy in God’s _____.

- _____-joy (Luke 10:17-20; ESV)
_____joy focuses our joy on those things that are eternal and really matter.

- _____-joy (Habakkuk 3:16-18)
_____joy” is joy in spite of sorrow and pain and trouble.

Both “nevertheless-joy” and “yet-joy” are made possible because, in the words of the angel, we have a Savior: “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. (Luke 2:10-11)

3. Find joy in _____ himself.

Our joy is not just about God’s promises to us, it’s about God’s presence _____ us.

Philippians 4: 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 ...The Lord is near.

Some Recommended Christmas Albums, a Playlist, and an Article:

- “Advent Songs,” Sojourn Music - Well before Mike Cospoer was creating one of the biggest podcasts of the year (“The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill”) he was producing beautiful and creative albums like this one in his role at Sojourn Church in Louisville. This might be an acquired taste, but it’s worth it, especially if you’re looking for something worshipful and different.
- “Christmas,” Sandra McCracken - I love her style of music and singing, so I’m happy she produced this Christmas album.
- “Christmastime is Here,” Marc Martel - I don’t know anything about him personally but I know he has been on the Christian music concert circuit, and he did voice of Freddy Mercury for the movie Bohemian Rhapsody (whenever they needed a stand-in). You’ll hear the similarity in this album. Listen if you like Freddy Mercury’s voice.
- Dash & Lily Playlist - Fun Christmas music that was the soundtrack on this Netflix Christmas series from last year that we really enjoyed and even watched again this year.
- “I Love Santa,” Trevin Wax (<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/i-love-santa/>) - If you love even the trappings of the Christmas season, read this from one of my favorite theologians. You’ll love it and be encouraged to go all in.

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week’s sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Read Acts 14:17. What are some of God’s pleasures that bring you joy?
3. What is at least one thing that brings you joy that can become an idol in your life?
4. Read Philippians 4:4-5. What is one thing you can do in 2022 to grow in deeper love with God himself, a love where his presence means more and more to your sense of well being?